

LAPORTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2005

The Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, January 18, 2005 in the lobby level meeting room #3, of the LaPorte County Annex and Security Complex at 10:00 a.m...

Present at the meeting were LaPorte County Commission President Marlow Harmon, Vice President William Hager, and Member Barbara Huston. Also present were LaPorte County Auditor Teresa Shuter, LaPorte County Attorney Robert Szilagyi and Recording Secretary, Linda Arnett.

Commissioner Harmon called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m...

LaPorte County Superior Court #4, Chief Probation Officer Stephen Eyrick, Led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Harmon, do we have any amendments, deletions or corrections to the minutes. We have to add under "Old Business" section "D" amendments of Mr. Domkowski who is been appointed to General Foreman and Mr. Steve Cox as Garage Foreman and also under section "E" under "Old Business" Springfield Sewer District appointment and under "New Business" section "E" Speed Limit Sign on 400 North-400 West. Also, miscellaneous claims was advertised at \$198,048.06 and it is actually \$200,559.64, those are the changes we have. Mr. Hager made a motion to approve the agenda as amended, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Hager made a motion to approve the minutes as presented of January 4, 2005, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a voice vote.

WEEKLY REPORTS

The Commissioners review and sign weekly reports during the meeting.

CLAIMS

Payroll ending January 28, 2005. Mrs. Huston, made a motion to approve pay roll as submitted, second by Mr. Hager. Motion carried with a roll-call vote 3-0.

Miscellaneous Claims, in the amount of \$200,559.64, Mr. Hager made a motion to pay miscellaneous claims as presented, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a roll-call vote 3-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

REQUESTS

Walt Sell, Purdue Extension Director—Request funding for 4-H Youth Program \$35,000.00 year 2005/ two (2) additional telephone lines

Mr. Sell, my request is regarding the funding for the 4-H Program for the Purdue Extension Office in LaPorte County. In the past there was \$20,000.00 in the Commissioners budget that went to the LaPorte County Ag Association, and then converted to us to help fund some of the 4-H activities. I have a hand out that shows the related expenses and the approximate cost of those, so I am asking for you to fund those activities for the amount of \$35,000.00 payable to the LaPorte County Fair Association. I talked to the treasurer and the president and asked if we could put those funds in a separate account, so it would be easy to track them and they indicated to me that this could be done, so we could draw off that account for these expenses so you could see how the funds are being spent.

Mr. Harmon, I appreciate how you laid this out, this is showing how and where the money is being spent and where it is being spent. I believe this is what we were looking for all this time where the money is going to the fair as far as the board was concerned. Mr. Harmon, questions or comments from the board.

Mr. Hager, you don't want to handle the money?

Mr. Sell, I think the reason we would rather not handle that Mr. Hager, is that there is quite a bit of paperwork involved in those transactions and it would add additional work load to our clerical staff. We have had a pretty good working relationship the way it happened in the past we would prefer to continue to do it that way.

Mr. Hager, and I understand that but I have a problem giving money to an organization that has no accountability to us, with the State Board of Accounts or any thing else. That is one of the problems that I have, if I give money out I want to

see where it goes and where every penny goes and I want an accurate account of it and I want the State Board of Accounts to go thru it.

Mr. Sell, I think that is why we say we would put it in a separate account for tracking purposes.

Mr. Hager, but they still don't have to audit that like they do anything else, they are not accountable they don't have to have a state audit. I have a problem with giving it to the fair board.

Mrs. Huston, Mr. Sell, you have this pretty well marked out as far as what the money is being spent for however, did the fair board support you in this much money before along with the money that we supplied to them? They over and up above that supplied this amount?

Mr. Sell, this is the total amount bases on the 2004 expenses, so the \$20,000.00 this came out last year from the money that came out of the commissioner's budget and then the additional expenses they came up with from their funds.

Mrs. Huston, but they did support you in this amount? Is that correct?

Mr. Sell, I believe last years expenses were around 33 or a little bit over \$33,000.00 so they would have supplemented the \$20,000.00 by the amount of \$13,700.00. And then the other things that are not included in here, that are not directly related to our program would be things like our program would be things like building space and cost of utilities in addition to what is listed here.

Mrs. Huston , so what you are asking for, the \$35,000.00 that you are asking for, is a little above of what the expenses were last year of 33,700 and is their a reason for that.

Mr. Sell, because the expenses vary a little from year to year, some years they will be a little higher and some a little lower based on participation or the number of judges that we use and the premiums we pay out. But we would only spend the, if we have any money left over, we only spend what the actual cost would be.

Mrs. Huston, so you are asking this board to give you permission for an additional \$15,000.00 to be added to the \$20,000.00 that we normally give to the 4-H, for additional revenue that they did support you in before.

Mr. Sell, yes in addition because this more accurately reflects the actual cost of the program, for the judges the premiums and the ribbons the trips. The reason I am asking for the total amount is because the last August at the budget that amount was not approved in the budget.

Mrs. Huston, do you have receipts for all the ribbons and everything that you purchase in this amount of \$33,700.00?

Mr. Sell, no not with me.

Mrs. Huston, are those amounts turned over to the fair board?

Mr. Sell, we do get billed for each of these expenses and turn over to Dennis, who is the Treasurer of the LaPorte County Ag Association and then they pay those.

Ms. Huston, put you do have receipts for all of those.

Mr. Sell, yes I am not sure at this point, I don't specifically coordinate the 4-H program, Scott Foster and Hugh Tongel run that program under our office. I don't know exactly how they do it, so I can't give you the specifics but there are receipts if they are with our office or their office.

Mr. Hager, I just want to see that every bit of this money goes to the 4-H kids.

Mr. Harmon and I agree with Mr. Hager and I know and Mr. Hager you know that we are in the process of working on a program for out there and we plan on addressing that issue. I am sure that you have to get moving on things this year that is the reason this was brought up now and is being done. We will soon be addressing how that will be handled. Now at this time I will be requesting a motion.

Mrs. Huston, I make a motion we approve this, but before I make this motion, you have on here two additional telephone lines.

Mr. Sell, two separate requests.

Mrs. Huston, okay then I make a motion we approve the \$35,000.00 for the Purdue Extension Director, second by Mr. Hager, as long as it goes for the 4-H kids only. Motion carried with a roll-call vote 3-0.

Mr. Harmon, second request is for two additional telephone lines by Mr. Sell for the Extension Office. Is there a reason you are asking for additional phone lines.

Mr. Sell, yes there is a program that we have that is called the Food and Nutrition Program which is a federal funded grant program and it is run thru the State of Indiana by Purdue Extension so its run thru the university and then money for funds from that is distributed among the counties. With that money we are able to hire a person that will work for us 20 hours, that will work with low income families specifically in food and nutrition helping those making good decisions on purchasing nutritious food, preparing them for the families to stretch the family dollars. That position, we have had it in the past, it's currently vacant we are going to fill that position in a few weeks and we need to provide that person with a phone. And then

we also have an individual by the name of Diane Anderson that comes in three times a week that works with the Master Gardener Program and we need a phone for her as well. I did talk with Mr. Carpenter and Kent indicated to me that the cost would be in the lines and in the programming system.

Mr. Harmon, do you have any money in your account to pay for those phones?

Mr. Sell, we do have some office supply funds.

Mr. Harmon, we can pick up the actual phone bill put as far as the installation of the phones.

Mr. Sell, we currently do not, we're asking for that to come out of the commissioner's budget.

Mr. Harmon, do we have any idea how much that cost will be?

Mr. Sell, no I don't, Mr. Carpenter would be able to inform you of that better then I would.

Mr. Hager, how many lines are in there now?

Mr. Sell, I believe there are ten (10).

Mr. Hager; I have a problem giving lines to part-time people. I want to know the price before I give my approval, before I can vote on it I want to know what it is going to cost. Couldn't you put one line in and put it for two part-time people?

Mr. Sell, I think we could consider making one additional phone line work, I would have to go back and sort it all out but certainly one additional phone line would be better then none.

Mr. Hager, okay because I know if we send to the county council they are going to want to know the price and everything before they do give approval. So I would make a motion that we table it until our next meeting and get the price and see if we could get by with one line.

Mr. Sell, I will get with Mr. Carpenter and try to find that out.

Mr. Harmon, we have a motion to table, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a voice vote 3-0.

Lawrence E. Bolka, Retiring January 31, 2005-Insurance Request

Mr. Harmon, Larry Bolka is retiring as of February 1, 2005 and he is asking to remain on the insurance. Mr. Bolka has met all the requirements that the county requires at this time, he does have 35 years of service and he started February 1, 1970 and he is retiring February 1, 2005. I talked with Mr. Bolka yesterday and he had thought of not retiring but as of yesterday he said his mind was made up to retire on February 1. Mrs. Huston, I make a motion that we approve Mr. Bolka's request, second by Mr. Hager. Motion carried with a roll-call vote 3-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Dennis Terry, Partners in Contracting---Request for Funding

Mr. Harmon, this was tabled at the last meeting, is Mr. Terry here. We will leave on the table at this time.

Stephen Eyrick, Chief Probation Officer, LaPorte Superior Court #4--- Video Arraignment

Mr. Eyrick, the committee which consisted of Judge Boklund, Judge Gilmore, Ron Tulacz, Dick Buel of the Sheriff's Department as well as members of council, Mr. Ludlow, Mr. Cooley and Mrs. Spevak met with both vendors who gave a presentation on each of their proposals. They fielded various questions from the group and the general consensus after meeting with both of those vendors was to recommend the commission go with Esco Communications.

Mr. Harmon, which one again.

Mr. Eyrick, Esco Communications.

Mr. Harmon, I apologize for not making that meeting, but I heard from some people that did attend to it were very impressed with both companies.

Mr. Eyrick, they both did remarkable jobs, both have quality proposals and quality equipment but the general consensus of the committee was to design and technology communications system.

Mr. Hager I talked with Mr. Cooley on it and I would make a motion to go with Mr. Eyrick's recommendation, seconded by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a roll-call vote 3-0.

Mr. Eyrick, direction on the next step.

Mr. Harmon, the next step will be to go to the council for the additional appropriation for the money.

Mr. Eyrick, do you want me to line that up.

Mr. Harmon, yes.

Wanatah Public Library—Amendment of Appointment from Julia Bolt to Linda Werner

Mr. Harmon, at the last meeting we appointed Julia Bolt and it should have been Linda Werner. Mr. Hager to resend the previous motion of putting Mrs. Bolt on the board, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a voice vote 3-0.

Mr. Hager made a motion to appoint Linda Werner, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a roll-call vote 3-0.

LaPorte County Highway—Amendment of Appointments

Mr. Harmon, amendments for Ron Dombkowski and Steve Cox.

Mr. Hager, made a motion to resend the appointment of Ron Dombkowski making Ron Dombkowski Garage Foreman and Steve Cox General Foreman, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a voice vote.

Mr. Hager, made a motion to appoint Ron Dombkowski General Foreman and Steve Cox Garage Foreman, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a roll-call vote 3-0.

Springfield Township Sewer District Appointment

Mr. Harmon, we do have an appointment for that position for the expired term of a member.

Mr. Hager, made a motion to appoint Lisa Dabkowski, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a roll-call vote 3-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Karen Biernacki, Executive Director—Harmony House/CASA Grants –Casa VOCA Grant & Harmony House VOCA Grant

Mrs. Biernacki, you have copies of the VOCA Grant for Casa and Harmony House, I gave copies for you and two originals. The last couple of years Harmony House has gotten funding for victims crime and Casa has gotten funding the last five years. The Casa Grant is filtered thru Circuit Court and the Harmony House Grant is filtered thru Superior Court 4.

Mr. Hager, made a motion to allow the President sign the grants for CASA and Harmony House Grants, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a roll-call vote 3-0.

Georgiana Wolff, Co-Director Voters Registration, Statewide Voter Registration System

Mrs. Georgiana Wolff, we would like to ask that you adopt resolution for us to be one of ten (10) pilot counties in the State of Indiana for the new Voter Registration System.

Ms. Lynne Spevak, it is an honor that we were chosen we are quite pleased.

Mr. Harmon, I had the pleasure of sitting in there for about an hour and this is the first time the state is going to help us without charging us a bundle of money, so it's one of those mandates but yet it's a pilot program and it is an honor to be one of the first counties in the state.

Mr. Harmon, we have a resolution before us, a Resolution Approving the Memo Of Understanding Between the County of LaPorte and the State of Indiana Concerning This County's Participation as a Pilot County in the Development of Indiana's Statewide Voter Registration System.

Mr. Hager, made a motion to approve the Resolution, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a roll-call vote 3-0.

Mr. Hager, this is also for the President to sign.

Mr. Harmon, the motion will also include that the President will sign the contract.

Richard Dombrowski, LaPorte County Utility Inspector, Amendment to County Ordinance

Mr. Dombrowski, first off the ordinance that we started out with, I had to make a couple of changes, we are now combining two ordinances into one. As you know there is a lot more building going on in the county and if I have property five-ten years ago they would not buy it because of the high embankment the roads are way low. Now they are buying these properties and when the telephone line is going thru there and it's 36 inches from the top of the hill and when they put their driveways in there it's only a foot along the surface which makes it no good according to our specifications. They say they want it moved and then they try to charge the taxpayers and I don't think that's right either, if they put it in at the depth we want in the first place which I want it to be from the surface of the county road then 36 inches down or 48 inches. The other ordinance is the part that Mr. Szilagyi made up is for the pedestals, for the fiber optic they are in our right of way and in the summer time the weeds grow up on them and you don't see them and you get a new

guy on one of the cutters and they hit them. We are proposing that they put a flag on them during the summer time so we don't hit them.

Mr. Hager, I would prefer on these pedestals that they have to keep them maintained in a five foot radius, with a flag around them we are still tearing them up and they are trying to charge us for them.

Mr. Szilagyi, when you talk about the embankment they put fiber optic on the embankment and they knock it down, to put a driveway I am trying to figure out, do you want it 48 inches?

Mr. Dombrowski, I want it 48 inches from the surface of the county road.

Mr. Szilagyi, so if the embankment is two foot higher then the road they will go down 6 foot then.

Mr. Dombrowski, right.

Mr. Hager, made a motion to adopt with the ordinance with the amendments, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a roll-call vote 3-0.

Mr. Harmon, we will hold this over to the next meeting for second reading.

Kenneth Layton, LaPorte County Treasurer--Board of Finance Report

Mr. Ken Layton, LaPorte County Treasurer, the first order of business is for the Board of Finance to select its officers. It's usually the President or the Secretary Treasurer the Commissioners are part of that.

Mr. Harmon, do you need a nomination?

Mrs. Huston, made a motion for Mr. Harmon to serve as President of the Board of Finance, second by Mr. Hager. Motion carried with a voice vote 3-0.

Mr. Hager, made a motion that Ken Layton as Secretary of the Board of Finance, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a voice vote 3-0.

Mr. Layton, I would like to ask the commission to confer with the Board of Finance to recognize for the year 2005 all the financial institutions that we are currently doing business with for 2004 along with the state approved list that you have got.

Mr. Hager, made a motion to approve the recommendation of the secretary of the Board of Finance, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a roll-call vote 3-0.

Mr. Layton, the commission has a written report in front of it on the investments report of 2004. As is stated in there, there were some negatives and the negative was

that the interest rate did not rise as predicted for 2004. We are beginning to see a little bit of an increase this year over last year, tax collection fell behind for the year 2004. I want to emphasize that it was not LaPorte Counties fault, we were ready to go, its always has been for the last two years that cross county involvement. We were able to have two separate billings in LaPorte County for approximately 70% of our citizens; there are six different taxing units that within a cross county St. Joseph County the prohibited us from have a roll tax bill for those citizens, they paid one bill in November. The positive of it was is that we had a normal settlement December 30th; we were able to balance with the Auditors Office, Treasurers Office and State of Indiana and make up our balance. We did do the normal 100 % settlement December the 30th all funds that were in-house were dispersed. Things do not look rosy, for 2005, I met with the treasurer of St. Joseph County, unfortunately they did not have a normal settlement in December they have only dispersed 60% of the funds that they have, they still have not settled totally for December in St. Joe County. It does not look like they will be ready to go for normal taxation that goes May 10th to November 10th, we will be ready here again we are going to have to ask for special permission from the State of Indiana to allow us to do a split billing again this year. We have people in other townships that are not going to like that; it's beyond our control unless something changes in St. Joe County, I don't think they are going to make it, so we are going to have to ask for special consideration from the State of Indiana. They let us do it last year I think they will let us do it again this year. The only negative of the report was that from 2003 to 2004 we brought in \$20,000.00 less money in interest, I think that that is going to change in the near future.

Mr. Hager, made a motion to accept Mr. Layton's report, second by Mrs. Huston. Motion carried with a roll-call vote 3-0.

Mr. Hager, this letter was sent out to Rick. McVay. Mr. McVay it does look like we need to put a speed limit on that stretch of road there are some pretty good points about the curves and sight distance is pretty questionable. But right now for us to put out our traffic counters out we can't do it with the snow and cant if it's less than 35 degrees.

Mr. Harmon, we had received this letter from a young lad, he is fourteen years old requesting a speed limit sign on 400 west and we appreciate that. We will notify Mr. Fetterer and let him know how this is proceeding.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Richard Delco, I live in the Springfield Township area I have been looking at the roads and the ditches are getting filled up and they have been putting signs up beware of the water. And I was wondering if you could do like you did over in Coolspring on 400 and clean out the ditches on both sides of the road and do a little over in Springfield Township area. I have been there for 35 years and there is not

two much work they done where I live. The trees in the ditches almost fill the ditch
~~up so the water just lays there and the water can't run and this way the roads are~~
tearing up because of that and 800, the water is up to the roads and 850 they put a
sign out beware of the water on the road. I also like to see you, which I pay taxes for
is on my property on to the next so we get some drainage on to 850 for the road. The
water just lays their and that's 5ft of sand on top of clay and it either has to
evaporate or run off the road and if you don't keep your water table down you are
going to lose your road. I appreciate what you can do on this.

Mr. Harmon, some of our drainage problems is the responsibility of the Drainage
Board.

Mr. Hager, yes but I think they are out of money right now, on his property they
just went out and did a lot of that out there .

Mr. Harmon, we will pass this on to the Highway Department.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Mr. Harmon, I would like to thank Mayor Morris for helping with the water on
Sheron Drive

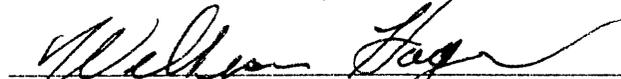
ADJOURN

Mr. Harmon adjourned the meeting at 10:55 a.m...

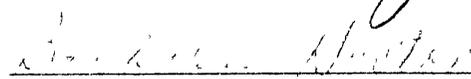
LAPORTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



MARLOW HARMON, President

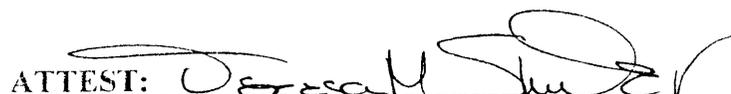


WILLIAM HAGER, Vice President



BARBARA HUSTON, Member

ATTEST:


TERESA SHUTER, Auditor

(Approximately 30 people in attendance)