



# BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS LAPORTE COUNTY

555 Michigan Avenue, Suite 202

LaPorte, IN 46350

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*Ken Layton  
President*

*Barbara Huston  
Vice President*

*Willie Milsap  
Member*

## LAPORTE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Tuesday, April 5, 2011

The LaPorte County Board of Commissioners met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, April 5, 2011, at 6:00 p.m. in the LaPorte County Complex Meeting Room #3.

### CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mr. Layton, President, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Craig Braje led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### ROLL CALL

All present

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve the minutes of March 15, 2011 as presented, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

### WEEKLY REPORTS

Commissioners review and sign the weekly reports during the meeting.

### CLAIMS

Payroll Ending April 15, 2011, Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

Misc. Claims ----\$1,240,829.53, Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve in the amount stipulated, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by roll call vote 3-0.

Mr. Layton, \$850,000.00 of that million two is just transfers within the department. There are no expenditures made.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS

None

CORRESPONDENCE

Jeff Wright, LaPorte County Highway Engineer/Indiana Department of Transportation Widening Project along US 421, Westville, IN

Mr. Layton, Mr. Wright called earlier in the week and told us this is the agreement between the county of LaPorte and the State of Indiana on the 421 corridor widening between the north junction of State Road 2 and 421.

Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

REQUESTS

Victory City Festival Committee/Request \$500 Tourism Funds

Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

St. Joseph Young Men's Society/Request \$500 Tourism Funds

Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

Wanatah Scarecrow Festival Committee/Request \$500 Tourism Funds

Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

Area Wanatah Chamber of Commerce/Request \$500 Tourism Funds

Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

LaPorte County Fair/Request \$500 Tourism Funds

Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

Rolling Prairie Community Center Inc., Olde Farmers' Fest/Request of Tourism Funds

Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

Rolling Prairie Business & Comm. Assoc., Country Christmas Prairie Style/Request of Tourism Funds

Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Parents and Friends/Lease With LaPorte County

Mr. Layton, we had a lease agreement with them in 2010 for the continuation of the county extension office. We have not signed this annual contract with them; not knowing what was going to happen with the building for their residency. We now know that that building is going to go forward. What is the board's pleasure continuing from now until December 31, 2011 at \$3,750 per month. If the contract isn't signed, it will go to \$4,000 per month.

Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Milsap.

Mr. Braje, in paragraph #4 of the agreement, #A should be stricken and #4B should read April 1, 2011 until December 31, 2011.

Mr. Layton, with the clarification from Mr. Braje, I will ask for passage of this and to have the dates of April 1, 2011 through and including December 31, 2011 with a new signage page attached from Mr. Scott of Parents and Friends, Inc.

Mrs. Huston amended her motion to pass this with provisions under #4 that A is stricken and B should read April 1, 2011 until December 31, 2011 be inserted and a new signage page, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### Karen Biernacki of LaPorte County CASA Program/Proclamation Declaring Child Abuse Prevention Month and Child Advocacy Month

Karen Biernacki, thank you for letting us put up our display on the courthouse lawn. Right now we have about 66 kids that need a CASA volunteer. This is our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I was going through old records and back in 1991 our budget from the county was \$14,000 and we had about five volunteers. Our budget now from the county is \$60,000 and a total budget of \$250,000. We've had 280 volunteers and 1600 children with 250,000 hours volunteering for those kids of LaPorte County. Thank you for supporting us throughout the years. I have given you a proclamation to sign.

Mr. Layton, thank you for all that you have done over the 20 years.

Mrs. Huston reads the Proclamation (see attached)

Mr. Milsap, what does it take to be a volunteer?

Mrs. Biernacki, a big heart, a commitment to kids, it takes 3-5 hours a week. We do a training that is 40 hours long, once a week. We also do a background check.

Mr. Milsap, what is the status makeup of minorities in the program?

Mrs. Biernacki, we have only three African-American volunteers and one of Asian background. We have probably 20% men.

##### Robert Young, LaPorte County Highway Superintendent/Request of CREDIT Funds

Mr. Layton, I spoke with Mr. Young earlier today and he is coming down with something. This is the annual request for the first draw of CREDIT Funds for the highway operations of \$1,750,000.00. Once it passes us, it has to go to the County Council for appropriation.

Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

##### Juan Puente, President, People Engaged in Preservation/LaPorte County Home Barns

Mr. Puente, I am here with my committee, Ken Baker, Dean White, Ron McAtee, and Tim Stabosz. They have worked very hard on the issue we are bringing before you. We think saving the barns is an important part of the corridor into LaPorte.

Mr. White, we are here to help preserve, restore and bring up public awareness of our rural area. Upon examination, we find the barns at the County Home in extensive decline and decay. There are large holes in the roof for water infiltration and broken out windows. There are bird droppings and rats and raccoons are taking up residence. We suggest a basic stabilization of the barns; emergency repairs to the roof and boarding up the windows. We are making a request to LaPorte County to commit to an emergency fund of \$10,000.00 as soon as possible to alleviate further damage. PEP will offer to expand its efforts to assist in the barns rehabilitation. We will assist in acquiring barn restoration contractor's bids for comparisons. We will assist in raising funds. We will assist with state and federal available grants. The Indiana Historical Landmark Foundation wants to partner with assistance and education of state programs. We have given you pictures of the barns and information on the National Barn Alliance and also the National Trust for Historic Preservation Barn Again is helping find ways to maintain and use historic barns. We need to act diligently and quickly to save and restore this valuable asset.

Mr. Baker, the choice we have is to stabilize the barn or lose it. PEP will be the spearhead to go out and seek other uses for the barn and see if there are grants available. You have already created a wonderful building and we appreciate you saving the county home. This would just add to that area.

Mr. McAtee, as you drive in to LaPorte, those two barns are a billboard for LaPorte County. We are hoping, at the very least, that we can stabilize the barns. Thank you for your consideration.

There is a question and answer discussion.

Mr. Layton, we know what we have out there. We know what the condition is and that the barns need to be fixed or eliminated. We are not the body that funds the programs. I would ask my fellow commissioners if they would allow you to forward this on to the County Council. You are going to need a better presentation for them. They are the county's financial watchdog and they do it very well. When you get on their agenda and approach them, ask for specifics.

Commissioners/Moving Meeting of May 3, 2011 to May 2, 2011

Mr. Layton, our May 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting is also Election Day and the courthouse will be closed. We are therefore moving the meeting to the Monday preceding that; May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 6:00 p.m. in these chambers.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Mr. Layton, Mr. Baker at our next meeting, we will have the Rumley lease here. It has been approved by your attorney and ours. It will be on our agenda that night.

ADJOURN

Mr. Layton, President, adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

LAPORTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Ken Layton, President



Barbara Huston, Vice President

Willie Milsap, Member

ATTEST:

  
Craig Hinchman, LaPorte  
County Auditor

**LA PORTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
PROCLAMATION**

**WHEREAS,** the County of La Porte prides itself on giving back to the community, contributing to the quality of life among our citizens; and

**WHEREAS,** the La Porte County Court Appointed Special Advocate Program speaks for the best interests of abused and neglected children who are involved in the juvenile courts; and

**WHEREAS,** more than 200 La Porte County children suffer from some form of abuse or neglect each year; and

**WHERE AS,** through national, state and local efforts, La Porte County Residents are encouraged to join together to raise awareness for those children fallen victim to abuse and neglect throughout the month of April; and

**WHEREAS,** this effort will give abused and neglected children in La Porte County a chance for a safe and positive future.

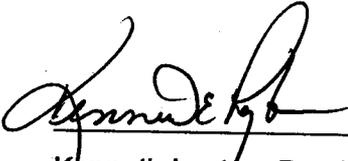
**NOW THEREFORE,** we the La Porte County Commissioners, by virtue of the authority vested in us, do hereby proclaim April 2011 as:

**LAPORTE COUNTY CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION  
AND  
CHILD ADVOCAY MONTH**

In this county, and in doing so, urge all citizens to join in a national, state, and local effort to raise awareness and prevent child abuse and neglect.

Adopted this 5<sup>TH</sup> day of April, 2011

BOARD OF COMMISSIONS  
LAPORTE COUNTY, INDIANA



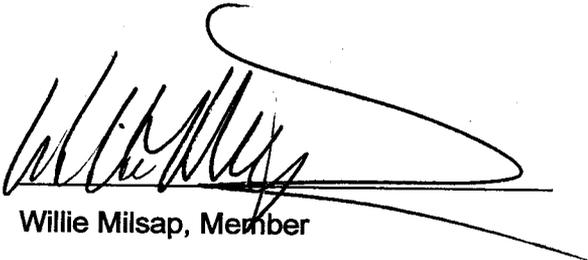
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Kenneth Layton, President  
President



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Barbara Huston, Vice



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Willie Milsap, Member

Attest: 

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Craig Hinchman, Auditor