



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS LAPORTE COUNTY

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*Ken Layton
President*

*Barbara Huston
Vice President*

*Willie Milsap
Member*

LAPORTE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Tuesday, October 18, 2011

The LaPorte County Board of Commissioners met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, October 18, 2011, at 10 a.m. in the LaPorte County Complex Meeting Room #3.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mr. Ken Layton, President, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Mike Seitz led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Layton, I would like to ask for a moment of silence for Ms. Ann Spevak who spent many, many years in county government and whose funeral was yesterday and we have just learned that long time County Councilman and County Commissioner Mr. Robert Miller has passed away this morning and I would ask for a moment of silence for them please.

ROLL CALL

All present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mrs. Huston, under Requests, please add D, Approval of Polling Places for the 2011 General Election and under Old Business, add D, Open Bids for Emergency Sirens.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

October 4, 2011, Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve 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 October 28, 2011, Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

Misc. Claims ---- \$1,421,724.93, Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve in the amount stipulated, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by roll call vote 3-0.

Regular Claims--\$1,349,117.48, Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve in the amount stipulated, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by roll call vote 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS

Fran Tibbot, EMA Director, LaPorte County got the top district score from Homeland Security for our assessment this year.

Mr. Layton, congratulations.

Sheriff Mollenhauer, we are having our third annual Halloween Safety Program for kids on Monday, October 31, 2011 from 4:00 to 5:00 in the park on Washington Street. We will be getting some information into the schools. We are giving them coloring books and glow in the dark necklaces for their safety.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

REQUESTS

Robert Young, Highway Superintendent/CEDIT Draw

Mr. Bob Young, we are asking for the November draw of CEDIT money to be placed in the proper account when that time comes.

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

Chamber of Commerce/Santa Statue

Mr. Mike Seitz, LaPorte Chamber of Commerce, we are requesting to place the Santa Clause statue in the front lawn of the Court House. Santa will be watching on who votes yes or no.

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

John Dudek, LaPorte County E-911 Director/Additional Appropriation

Mr. Dudek, I am here requesting that the commissioners permit me to go to the council on October 24, 2011, to ask the council to appropriate money out of the surcharge account to purchase recording and logging equipment that is outdated at the center.

Mrs. Huston, when I worked in the 911 department, I, too, noticed the equipment is outdated and they will no longer service the equipment. Mr. Dudek brought in several different firms to look at new equipment that is much needed in the department.

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

Mr. Milsap, is this one piece of equipment?

Mr. Dudek, this is one solid piece of equipment and will be next generation 911 ready, it will capture all the telephone lines, radio lines, email, text messaging and screen capturing.

Mrs. Huston, I was talking with Fran Tibbot and Dave Kaufman earlier, will this equipment be able to do the notification that I am in route to a call?

Mr. Dudek, they will be able to capture that on the recording and logging and that would be done through the interact system.

Mrs. Huston, how is the interact system coming?

Mr. Dudek, the target date for that is for January.

Motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

Lynne Spevak, LaPorte County Clerk/Approval of Polling Places for the 2011 General Election

Mr. Layton, our condolences on the loss of Ann.

Ms. Spevak, all the polling places that were in the primary election in the city of LaPorte and city of Michigan City did not change. They are all the same, handicapped accessible. This fall we had to add 8 towns that will have an election, either council or clerk/treasurer and they are at the same location as if we were running a township or presidential election. I need a formal approval due to the statute.

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

Mr. Milsap, on another matter, what is the status on the redistricting.

Ms. Spevak, we will get back with that at one of your November meetings. The only request I had was that your area would be taking some of the county. Council, we have to go by population. We will be holding a public hearing with a 48 – 72 hour notice and then we will come back to the Commission once or twice.

Mr. Layton, will there be a specific emphases on getting the precinct and ward lines aligned?

Ms. Spevak, yes. We are trying to get a map so when we do present them to the cities that they will fall right into place.

OLD BUSINESS

Roger and Tamara Osborn/Road Vacation (Tabled)

Mrs. Huston made a motion to remove from the table, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

Mrs. Tamara Osborn, we are requesting a road vacation and believe you have all the paperwork needed.

Mr. Braje, I have received the information and one issue that was outstanding was the issue concerning this park that existed there. I had a conversation with Mrs. Osborn about this. Normally, when someone develops a subdivision and they set aside a park it is controlled by an association. In this particular situation, for whatever reason, nobody owns that and it has been dedicated to the rights of the public. There isn't an identifiable unit that has to be provided notice. It is my opinion that the publication of the notice, which has been completed and I have received proof of, is satisfactory for notice of that park. It is now just a question of whether or not the commissioners are interested in vacating the road or not.

Mr. Milsap, is the road in question the entrance to Fish Lake?

Mrs. Osborn, Longshore dead ends at my property and this road that has never been developed is like part of our yard.

Mr. Milsap, by vacating this particular road, Fish Lake will still have an entrance?

Mrs. Osborn, the park is adjacent to it which is open land.

Mr. Layton, if we were to vacate these two undeveloped roads we would then be limiting for the future any access that the public might have to this portion of the lake.

Mrs. Huston, have you always live on this property?

Mrs. Osborn, no. We bought this property lately. We have owned it about a year.

Mrs. Huston, do you intend to live on it now?

Mrs. Osborn, no, it is up for sale.

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

Attorney Autumn Halaschak/Petition to Vacate Roadway (Tabled)

Mrs. Huston made a motion to remove from the table, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

Ms. Halaschak, on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Pat Hannon, I believe you have in front of you our petition to vacate as well as a map showing the area they wish to have vacated. I have also enclosed a copy of the publication as well as the consent by the adjoining property owner. We feel this vacation will not hinder the growth or development of the neighborhood on which the subject property is. The vacation will not make access to lands inconvenient. They are wanting to vacate this to pave the unimproved roadway and make it part of their driveway. We do have consent of Mrs. Pavy who is the adjoining lot owner on lot 120. At this time we ask that you would consider this.

Mr. Braje, I received a copy of the petition and the notices. I would bring to your attention one issue. The consent that has been provided is a petition incorrectly captioned as a petition to vacate the roadway. Clearly she has executed the document and it would appear to me that this constitutes consent even though it is labeled as a petition. It is simply the board's discretion. We have been provided with an ordinance that would need to be executed if the board approves this which provides a proper legal description for the portion to be vacated as opposed to just a reference. The ordinance is in proper form.

Mrs. Huston, who owns lots 123, 124, 121, & 120?

Mrs. Halaschak, Mrs. Pavy owns 120 and 121 and the Hannon's own 122 and 123.

Mr. Layton, do we know who the owner of 124 is?

Mrs. Halaschak, we do not but the roadway we seek to vacate is not adjoining by lot 124.

Mr. Layton, if this is approved as a vacation, does it in any way hinder ingress or egress to Pine Lake or the channel?

Mrs. Halaschak, no.

Mrs. Huston, it looks like if this portion is vacated that the 20 foot wide unimproved roadway in front of lot 124 the people wouldn't be able to get to it. Is there another way to get to that lot?

Mr. Hannon, their access is from Holton Road. The unimproved roadway continues around back to Nilewood. It is a loop.

Mrs. Huston, this 20 foot unimproved roadway runs in front of the lot and is used as a road?

Mr. Hannon, no. The only road is marked pavement running up to the unimproved roadway. We have graveled this section and maintained it for ten years. After that it is just brush, trees, swing sets and storage sheds. Most people do not know it exists.

Mr. Layton, is there a home on lot 124?

Mr. Hannon, yes with access from Holton Road.

Mr. Milsap, do you plan on staying there?

Mr. Hannon, yes.

Mrs. Huston, you have maintained that section as a drive way for ten years?

Mr. Hannon, yes but if we pave it, it will be much easier to maintain in the winter.

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

Mr. Braje, we have an ordinance here for your consideration.

Mrs. Huston made a motion to pass the ordinance by title only, An Ordinance To Vacate A Roadway Between Nilewood Lots 120 and 122, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0. Ordinance #2011-12.

Mrs. Huston made a motion to waive the rules and pass on second reading by title only, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

Representatives from PEP and Indiana Landmarks/LaPorte County Home Barns

Mr. Juan Puente, I am the president of People Engaged in Preservation. We are interested in saving the barns. We have put together a proposal to do just that. We have the support of the state landmarks organization. I will read you our proposal. PEP in partnership with Indiana Landmarks and a number of concerned residents of LaPorte County are interested in working with the LaPorte County Commissioners and Council on the barns at the LaPorte County Home. The goal in the proposal is to save the barns without cost to the county and to provide a potential new use to benefit LaPorte County. The proposal is as follows: the county leases to PEP for fifty years both the English Barn and the Bank Barn located at the County Home site on State Road 2. The lease would include language identifying prohibited uses that the county would deem disruptive to residents of the County Home. In exchange for the long term lease the barn coalition would undertake immediate stabilization of both buildings to mitigate further deterioration. Among the priority items would be repair of the roof, insulation and temporary shoring along the west and south elevations of the English barn to avoid collapse of the barn due to loss of the southwest corner post. Undertake an analysis of both buildings to determine structural and cosmetic repairs needed and associated costs to rehabilitation. Attention will be paid to the English barn to determine if in fact it can be saved or if demolition would be more appropriate. We would also prepare a proposal to solicit a third party that may be interested in repurposing the barn, review the proposals and select the most appropriate and viable plan. We would work with the selected parties to develop plans and implementation of the plans. We are thinking we would need about five years to analyze this viable plan and repurposing the barns and complete the necessary rehabilitation. If we can't find someone to repurpose the barn, we would terminate the lease at that point. In addition, we have received an anonymous donation of \$50,000 towards that project. We need your input and assistance to see if we can do this.

Mrs. Huston, there has been some talk about what we intend to do with the barns. One of the things we have talked about is allowing the fair board to let Pioneer land take a look at the barns and move them to Pioneer Land for their use. As you said, we can either take the barns down or if they cannot be salvaged in their entirety, the wood could be used in some way to reconstruct a building in Pioneer Land which we find very pleasing. We also have considered the new Allis Chalmers/Rumley museum that is going out there; offering one of the barns to them to dismantle and take over to their property so they can use it for some of the larger machinery or to fix the large machinery. I think it is very gratifying that you got a \$50,000 grant. I am not sure I am for giving you a fifty year lease or even five years to decide if the barns are even salvageable in their current condition.

Mr. Layton, what type of company, person or venues are you thinking about leasing this out for other uses?

Mr. Puente, it would be a museum type building or community event type situation where we would possibly run community events out of; also some fund raising type events. A certain percentage would go towards the county home, any fund raising would be jointly shared.

Mr. Milsap, if we do not go with this particular project, what will be the status of the barns, would they sit as is?

Mr. Layton, yes, we don't have any money to put into the facilities. Mr. White, you were here 6 months ago and at that time you were requesting \$10,000 to repair the roof.

Mr. White, we estimated just under \$20,000 for stabilization, repair the roof, board up the windows, and temporarily supporting the corner that is very unstable and we were requesting half of that. Now we want to utilize these donated funds and get some matching funds to continue on with that effort.

Mr. Layton, I have been to the barns numerous times over the years and there has been quite a bit of havoc created in those facilities. As Mrs. Huston stated, there has been several thoughts on what could be used by the Rumely project or Pioneer Land. I am not sure that putting in some type of commercial endeavor on county grounds....I am not sure the County Home is conducive to that kind of function. I am not prepared to make a judgment on this one way or the other this morning.

Mr. Puente, the fair grounds are located right across the street and when we talk about commercial endeavors there, it does draw tourism to the area which would be great for the county. We are sensitive to the County Home. The ability for us to do some joint fund raising for them would be an excellent approach. I think you understand that these things are viable to be saved. I like the barns where they are. I understand the idea of moving them. It also would have the goal of saving them. We would like to encourage you to understand that we are ready, willing and able to engage a proposal here. We have tried to move forward and we urge you to take a position and see what we can do together.

Mrs. Huston, is it possible that PEP could take this same enthusiasm if the barn was moved over to Pioneer Land? I am not interested in your fifty year lease. I would however entertain if the fairgrounds is okay with it. I applaud the people in preservation because I think it is a very worthwhile organization. If you would be interested in the movement of the buildings and preserving the buildings for everyone to enjoy.... I am not in favor of disrupting the county home.

Mr. White, that sounds like a good idea. We are an organization that is out here to help with preservation and restoration. I think it is very important that something be done before winter. Water infiltration is causing damage to the interior; also, the southwest corner of the gable bank building is in dire straits, there are foundational supports that are rotted out and all this needs to be attended to. That is my recommendation as a general contractor.

Mr. Milsap, it might not be feasible to consider moving it across the road. I think we need to evaluate if the structure is capable of being moved. If not, what?

Mr. Puente, that is a very good point. I will go back to our constituency and we will look at that very closely, we never thought of moving them.

Mr. White, we did have a barn restoration company do an assessment of the two barns and the barn closest to the road is 95% intact and very salvageable. The gable bank barn was designated as 70% intact. To let them waiver with the elements is not a wise decision.

Mr. Layton, we will take this under advisement. We also have the council to confer with on this and when you talk about obligating the county to fifty years to somebody that is long beyond our terms here. I am hesitant to obligate the county to fifty years for anything.

Mr. White, if we could just help in getting them preserved and usable, we would be willing to help with that. We have already done a lot of leg work on this so if we could get together rather than let this all go by the wayside.

Mr. Milsap, how did you come up with the fifty years?

Mr. Puente, the five years would just reflect...once you have restored the building, getting a viable user, whether it be for museum storage or a venue to sell crafts, you don't want to be putting in tons of money and then lose the ability to use it.

Mr. Ken Baker, the Rumely/Allis Chalmers is having a trustees meeting Saturday. If they would be interested, it would take the pressure off of the County Home because we are looking to making the south barn into a shop and the north barn into storage. It would fit in well with the museum. People could visit the museum and then go through the underpass to visit work in progress. We need storage for people that would donate things to us. We hope that if we could get a shop there that we could reach an agreement with 4-H for possible tractor restoration or they are forming some FFA chapters here in the county that would include classes for 4-H kids to come in and have hands on projects.

Open Bids for Emergency Sirens

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

Mr. Braje, we have one bid from ERS in the amount of \$170,673.79.

Mr. Layton, can you remind us what this is for?

Mrs. Tibbot, narrow banding is coming December 31, 2011. We need to have all of our sirens narrow banded. We talked about replacing three of the sirens. We need to bring everything up to date. We also asked for a computer to be put in the Emergency Management office so we can tell which sirens are working. We can get to them right away if we have a problem. The narrow banding is a requirement by federal law that we have to have. We have a total of 45 sirens.

Mr. Milsap, where is ERS located?

Mrs. Tibbot, Elkhart and we have used them.

Mrs. Huston made a motion to turn the bid over to Mrs. Tibbot for her review and recommendation, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

New Business

Melissa Mischke, GIS Coordinator/Authorization to Proceed for GIS Professional Services

Mrs. Mischke, you have been provided with authorization to proceed for professional services from the Schneider Corporation. At your last meeting I requested that we cancel the contract with our existing provider so we can go forward with this new service provider.

Mrs. Huston, what is the difference?

Mrs. Mischke, we cancelled the Sidwell contract because we made upgrades to our existing core software. It made the current version of the software incompatible. After talking with Donna Bell in the Real Estate Office, there were some areas she found cumbersome with the existing software and we looked at price and usability and she suggested she thought this one was the easiest and cost saving from the existing provider.

Mr. Milsap, there was no financial penalty for getting out of the contract?

Mrs. Mischke, no, not at all.

Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve and give permission for the president to sign on behalf of the board, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

Tim Morgan, Park Superintendent/Additional Appropriation for 2011 Ford Escape Hybrid SUV and 2011 Small Utility Tractor

Mr. Morgan, you should have before you the following requested items that were approved unanimously by the Park Board, Park Foundation Board, County Commission and County Council in July of 2008 for the park department to apply for a Federal/NIRPC CMAQ grant, phase one was funded and delivered last year. We received a replacement for a one ton dump truck which you approved last year. That was 100% reimbursed. There is a little difference because we are looking at 2008 numbers. Phase two of the CMAQ funding did come through. We are in the process of getting quotes and approval from our park board. One quote was for \$28,485 from Hirsch Ford for a 2012 Ford Hybrid Escape and we also have a quote from Frontier Lawn for a 2011 small utility tractor for \$14,500. According to federal guidelines, we sent out requests by certified return mail and we received those back from all three Ford dealers. I did pass that through Braje, Nelson and Janes and they had no problems that we solicited for three quotes and only received one. If Hirsch Ford cannot find one on the lot, we will have to throw out these quotes and re-solicit. This is 100% federal reimbursed, the difference is CMAQ round two grant amount.....when we got a quote for the tractor as well as the

Hybrid back in 2008, the prices increased a little bit. The difference in that is going to be made up out of our non reverting capital fund by the park board should you and the council approve that.

Mrs. Huston, you are just asking to get our approval to go before the county council, there is no money involved?

Mr. Morgan, yes.

Mrs. Huston made a motion to approve provided they can find a truck, seconded by Mr. Milsap, motion carried by voice vote 3-0.

Tim Morgan, Park Superintendent/Additional Appropriation for 2012 Chevrolet Silverado Truck

Mr. Morgan, we have in our fleet right now two heavy duty 2002 & 2004 Silverado trucks. The 2002 is a plow truck. In talking with our park board about the master plan, the way we have adjusted our part time employees to arrive and the site and work there all day, we thought we could get by with one less vehicle. It would be cost saving for the county. There is good value left in these low mileage trucks. We thought we could combine both of those in a trade in and replace them with one plow truck. The low quote was from Harbor for \$16,686.66 for a 2012 Chevrolet Silverado. The MSRP is \$38,578....we got a considerable amount on the trade value. The park board is again asking for your blessing to go before the Council Monday night.

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

Tim Morgan, Park Superintendent/Additional Appropriation for Skag Turf Tiger Mower

Mr. Morgan, this is for a mower replacement. We have four different major county parks, all of which have their own little maintenance barn. It works out nicely so we don't have to be driving equipment all over. This mower has been in service since 1989. We have four John Deere mowers right now. This Skag is an American made mower and it is a little less expensive than the John Deere. This old mower has a lot of hours of operation. We are asking that this be replaced with a 61 inch Skag Turf Tiger front deck mower with bagger.

Mr. Layton, looking through the quotes, I don't see where they have credited for any type of a trade in.

Mr. Morgan, we are not trading this in, we want to keep a spare. There is no value in the mower as far as trade in value.

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

Economic Development/Updates

Mr. Matt Reardon, SEH of Indiana, we are happy to report that through the efforts of the Alliance the county has received a \$1.304 grant for the purpose of economic development in the area of U.S. 421 and I-94. That was a competitive situation through the transportation community's systems preservations program. There were two grants awarded in the state and LaPorte County was one of them. The time line for the project so we can get the record straight here was in March 10, 2010, the county Redevelop Commission put together a redevelop plan with Holladay Properties, City of Michigan City, the water department and sanitary to do a TIF project. I'm sure you have seen the new building going up and the roadways that have been implemented. As a result of the action by those boards in July 2010, bonds were approved, the project started, flash forward to May 25 there was an application available. At the suggestion of the Alliance and the county highway department we went after that and that was awarded as of September 2011. There is a time line related to these grants but it was directed to the 421 interchange where there is an anticipated \$22,000,000 of private investment that would be sparked by this.

Mr. John Regetz, The LaPorte County Economic Development Alliance is coordinating with the County Commission, the Council and County Highway Department, Plan Commission as well as the Michigan City Water District and the Sanitary District and land owners in the area between 421 and 950, 400 and I94. Also we are working to get some extra grant funds and \$1.3 was awarded on this. Jeff Wright is investigating further funding to the development of the streets. Along 400 N. there is a proposed sanitary sewer that is a gravity feed sewer and that would be in place rather than lift stations

or power stations. Water would also have to be run along those routes as well. There is a proposal for a road improvement along 950. We are looking at street improvements along 950 as well as sanitary and water development, part of this process is in conjunction with land owners, Tonn and Blank and Holladay Properties. There is a proposal for an establishment of a right of way. We are looking at adjustments to the designs made by Beam, Longest and Neff for the 950 W. improvements, moving water and sewer to the east side of the street and see if we can't get adjustments done in the existing right of way to minimize any land acquisition. We will continue to finalize the engineering designs on the project as well as acquiring additional funding for the actual street improvements themselves as well as water & sanitary sewer that this grant is proposed to be applied to.

Mrs. Huston, I sit on the Plan Commission and this morning I had a conversation with Ray Hamilton. The Plan Commission gave permission to Holladay Properties to go ahead to get access and another way out of this property so that they wouldn't use that access road at all times. If this entire project goes through, which I am hoping it does, there is too much traffic going out on that road. We had an additional meeting with Tonn and Blank and we discussed the possibility of a proposed connector road, but to date, they have not come back before the Plan Commission to ask for further permission to go forward. I understand there is a road going in today.

Mr. Jeff Wright, Highway Engineer, yes, the road is being cut back a certain distance.

Mrs. Huston, this is on their property, but my point is, they did not come back to the Plan Commission for final and further permission after they got approval from Tonn & Blank or the land owners.

Mr. Reardon, part of the meeting we held last week with the adjoining land owners that was strongly suggested because if they cannot reach an agreement with the connector road or when it is going to be installed, it was our understanding by order of the Plan Commission that you cannot develop any more properties until you have secondary ingress and egress to the site. Our discussions were largely about having that secondary access at the signalized intersection at 950 and Cleveland, resolving that skewed intersection as part of this proposal. When we left the meeting, there was a clear understanding that they need to get their house in order to further the growth and development before anything can happen here.

Mrs. Huston, I think that what the Plan Commission wanted to see was the proposal between Holladay Properties and Tonn and Blank that they would allow them to go across their land to go on 950. My biggest concern is that this property will be developed and they would only have one way in and one way out.

Mr. Regetz, I think the situation is that no more building permits will be issued for further development. They made their investment with positive anticipation and realize they need another way out before getting more building permits approved by the Plan Commission. They are looking to get confirmation of the different requirements for a secondary access.

Mr. Biege, I talked with Holladay Properties yesterday. They asked for my assistance in working at what type of document they can provide the Plan Commission to show what they have worked out with Tonn and Blank. They are requesting a meeting before the Plan Commission. I think this is underway.

Mr. Wright, one key factor was that Tonn & Blank needs to have 950 developed in order to accommodate their piece of the puzzle. All of this is coming together.

Mrs. Huston, I am glad it is coming together. I just think the request from the Plan Commission should have been honored.

Mr. Regetz, the Alliance just attended the Produce Marketers Association in Atlanta, GA, and that is in support of developing markets to get perishable food products coming up to LaPorte County, as well as getting LaPorte Agricultural products down into the Florida and Mexico markets.

Approval of LaPorte County Offices 2012 Holidays

Mr. Layton, one thing I want to put in front of my fellow commissioners, we seem to be closed on election days and I don't know why. The city offices are not closed on Election Day. I talked to Ms.

Spevak about it. Originally I thought it was state law and Lynne clarified the fact that it is not state law.

Ms. Spevak, if we stay open I will have to ask the judge to close the courthouse. Those buildings are used for absentee voting. For Election Day the amount of people coming in and out of the courthouse is quite a few. Plus we use a lot of poll workers who are county employees; either working at the polls or I hire them during the day to be poll runners. The employees would have to take a vacation day if they are going to work the polls. The offices would have fewer staff if they were open. We would need lots of parking here. I can understand staying open when it is a city election but when it is a presidential election we use more people.

Mrs. Huston, our people are getting paid to be off and now they are being paid by the election board. Is that correct? They are double dipping. I don't see any reason to close on city elections.

Mr. Layton, I understand Ms. Spevak's concern and dilemma as far as operating her office as with the election being an additional burden. It has never made sense to me that county offices are closed because there is an election.

Mrs. Huston, is it possible to approve these on a year to year basis?

Mr. Layton, we always approve these holidays each year so I don't see why not.

Mr. Milsap made a motion approve the 2012 holidays as presented and to form a committee to look at it, chair seconded the motion, motion approved 2-1.

Mrs. Huston, the only thing I don't approve of is the formation of a committee. Ms. Spevak presented her problem rather well and we have always been closed on Election Day. I don't see a need for a committee.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Mr. Milsap, the drafting committee for the ethics ordinance is October 19, 2011, at 2:00 p.m. in the Commissioner's conference room.

Mr. Milsap, on Monday, October 31st, from 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. in Michigan City, LaPorte County is invite to the Haunted Horror Tent which will be at 1401 East Michigan Blvd. and if you have a heart condition I would advise you not to attend.

Mrs. Huston, since fall is here and the leaves are on the ground, be very careful of the mounds of leaves near the roadway as children love to play in them. Also, if the leaves are wet there is a possibility of sliding into oncoming traffic. Be careful when you drive; this is the time for trick or treaters and have a safe Halloween.

Mr. Layton, on behalf of the commissioners again, I would like to offer our condolences to the Spevak and Miller families in their losses. I would like to remind everyone of the open workshop between the council and commissioners on the discussion of the community correction facility and where we are going to go with that according to the federal mandate.

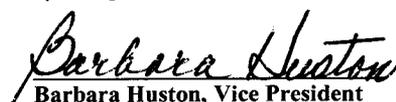
ADJOURN

Mr. Layton, President, adjourned the meeting at 11:41 a.m.

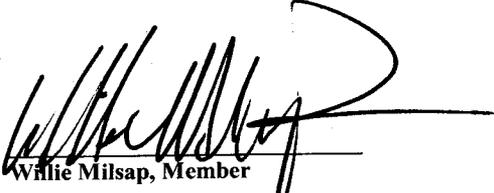
LAPORTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



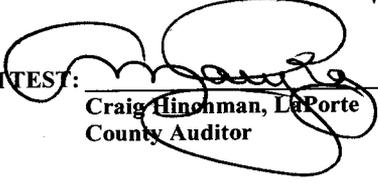
Ken Layton, President

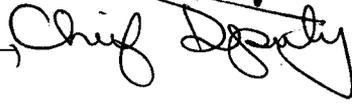


Barbara Huston, Vice President



Willie Milsap, Member

ATTEST: 
Craig Linchman, LaPorte
County Auditor


Chief Deputy