



**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
LA PORTE COUNTY
555 Michigan Avenue, Suite 202
La Porte, IN 46350-3400
Phone: (219) 326-6808 ext. 2229**

**Dr. Vidya Kora,
President**

**Sheila Brillson,
Vice President**

**Richard Mrozinski,
Member**

**LA PORTE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' REORGANIZATIONAL MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, January 2, 2019 at the La Porte County Complex Meeting Room #3 at 10:00 a.m.**

Auditor Joie Winski called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioners' Secretary Diane Gonzales called the roll: Commissioner Brillson – Present; Commissioner Kora – Present; Commissioner Mrozinski – Absent. Quorum therefore meeting commenced.

Auditor Joie Winski stated first order of business will be Election of Officers. Commissioner Sheila Brillson nominated Dr. Vidya Kora for President. Commissioner Kora seconded the nomination. Motion carried. Auditor Joie Winski congratulated Dr. Kora and handed the gavel over to him. Commissioner Sheila Brillson nominated herself for Vice President. President Kora stepped down and seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Commissioner Brillson motioned to add three items to the agenda: 1) Election of Officers; 2) under Requests: Consider support for Office of Community and Economic Development to approach the County Council regarding 2019 funding of that office; 3) consider support for the newly appointed maintenance Director to hire a foreman. President Kora stepped down and seconded. Motion carried.

Commissioner Brillson motioned to accept the minutes from December 19th, 2018. Commissioner Kora seconded. Motion carried.

Auditor Joie Winski read the claims with Payroll ending December 28, 2018, \$1,160,684.88 and Miscellaneous claims \$1,547,028.89. Commissioner Kora seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Commissioner Brillson motioned to appoint the following Department Heads and Professional Advisors:

Insurance Agencies of Record - Michiana Insurance and General Insurance Services

County Financial Advisor - Cender and Company

County Attorney - Friedman and Associates

Commissioners' Executive Assistant - Diane Gonzales

Animal Shelter Director - Jane Bernard

Community Corrections Director - Robert Neary

Assistant Community Corrections Director - Sojourner Atwater

County Engineer (Acting) - Jerry "Jay" Sullivan

County Highway Superintendent - Bob Young

County Planner - Mitch Bishop

Director, Office of Community & Economic Development - Tony Rodriguez

EMA Director/Planning - Larry Butcher

EMS Director - Andrew McGuire

E-911 Director (Acting) - Nicole Nixon

IT Director - Darlene Hale

Museum Curator - Keri Teller Jakubowski

Parks & Recreation Director - Jeremy Sobecki

Building Commissioner - Annemarie Polan

Right to Know/Hazmat - Jeff Hamilton

Maintenance Director - Larry Levendowski

Veterans' Service Officer - Joe Golec

Inspector of Weights & Measures – Mike Quinn

Commissioner Kora seconded the motion. Motion carried.

ORIGINAL

Commissioner Brillson motioned to appoint the following people to Boards and Commissions:

La Porte County Public Library Board – Sean Quinn
La Porte County Alcohol & Beverage Board – John McDaniel
Animal Control – LuAnn Troxel, Lisa Polazzi, DVM and Dr. Patrick Dorroh
Drainage Board – Sarah Haefner
La Porte County Board of Construction Review – John Carr, Scott Cooley and Jay Fuller
County Board of Health – Michael Sandy
County Board of Zoning Appeals – Dwayne Hogan
Community Corrections – Dan Peck, Steve Klosowski, Lester Norvell, Jim Kimmel, Andy Hynek, Kurt Earnst, Steve Eyrick, Paula Nichols, Bruce Ashley, Sr., Jeff Gangloff, Regina Ruddell, Ericka Stallworth and Mike Callahan
La Porte County Convention & Visitor’s Bureau – Sue Mollenhauer
E-911 Advisory Board – All current appointments are reappointed
Pioneer Cemetery Commission – Kevin Aikman, Sue Webster and Steve Grott
Property Tax Assessment Board of Appeals – Hassan Dabagia, Matt Bernacchi and Amy Blind
Redevelopment Commission – Stephanie Oberlie, Terry Larson and Joe Coar
Shared Ethics Advisory Commission – Samantha Everett
Kankakee River Basin Commission – Scott Cooley
Commissioner Kora seconded. Motion carried.

Commissioner Brillson motioned to appoint the following liaison positions:

County Highway – Brillson
RBA – Mrozinski
County Home – Mrozinski
Plan Commission – Mrozinski
Right to Know/Hazmat – Brillson
NIRPC – Brillson
Animal Control – Mrozinski
Workforce Development – Kora
Redevelopment Commission – Kora
NICTD – Mrozinski
Drainage Board – Mrozinski
E-911 – Brillson
Juvenile Services – Brillson
Solid Waste – Brillson, Kora, Mrozinski
Kankakee River Basin Commission – Mrozinski
Local Planning Council – Kora
La Porte County Fair Board – Mrozinski
Fairgrounds Events & Management Corporation – Brillson
Community Corrections – Kora
Weights & Measures – Brillson
Commissioner Kora seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Considered Designation of Publication: Legal Notice/Commission Meetings Agenda/Public Notice.

Commissioners meeting dates were advertised however Commissioner Mrozinski is on vacation and requested the January 16th meeting to be moved to the 23rd of January at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Brillson motioned to accept the change and the Designation of Publication. Commissioner Kora seconded. Motion carried. Commissioner Brillson stated all agendas will be posted on the county website prior to the meetings.

Public Comment – Barb Hooper – 114 Garden Street La Porte – Requested speed limit to be lowered on Garden Street in La Porte from 35 mph to 30 mph. Garden Street is between Small Road (30 mph) and Waverly Road (20 mph). Barb distributed handouts to the Commissioners of two speed studies done. First study was done on 11-1-2018 between hours of 7:15-9:15 am. Eighty two vehicles were monitored, 32 at the speed limit or less. Second study was at 3:05-4:21pm the same day. Ninety six vehicles were monitored with 30 of them at the speed limit or less. Commissioner Kora stated the Highway Superintendent Bob Young will be contacted and we will get back to her.

ORIGINAL

Dennis Metheny – 6757 W. 450 N. Michigan City - Commented on striping the roads. Stated on the agenda is a request for a street sweeper. Dennis said he would like to see the money spent on striping the roads instead of purchasing a street sweeper. He asked if items are added to the agenda, after the original was posted, how the public has access to the amended agenda. Commissioner Kora told Dennis he can report the roads to the Commissioners that he wants striped. Commissioner Kora also stated the agenda is posted 48 hours prior to the meeting and only when necessary is it amended. Commissioner Brillson stated the weather is a factor in striping.

Chris Throgmorton – 1607 J Street La Porte – Concerned with a court order prohibiting electronic devices in the courthouses. Commissioner Kora stated Chris will be contacted by the Commission.

Department Head Comments: Bob Young – Highway Superintendent – Responded to striping that was brought up by Dennis Metheny. The weather does factor in to the scheduling of line striping. Bob said he could provide Dennis with a list of roads that had been done this past year. Bob also stated Barb Hooper had been to his office on the Garden Street speed limit issue with documentation. He recommended the speed limit should be lowered to 30 mph. Commissioner Kora told Bob to have his recommendation available for the next meeting agenda.

Commissioner Sheila Brillson reported that Department Head Comments is a set item on the agenda. In the upcoming months Department Heads will be required to give a report on their office to the Commissioners. Commissioner Kora stated meetings will be held with the Departments to keep the Public informed.

Requests: Considered a request from highway superintendent Bob Young to approach the Council regarding the purchase of a street sweeper. Bob stated the need for a street sweeper is for the subdivisions in the county where throughout the year after using salt/sand the storm drains can get plugged up. The sweeper is brand new but was a demo. Price for the sweeper is \$265,000 which is in the highway department's budget. Commissioner Brillson asked how many sweepers the department currently has and their ages. Bob said his department has only one that is 10-12 years old. Commissioner Brillson motioned to approve the request to approach the Council. Commissioner Kora seconded. Motion carried.

Considered support for the 2019 funding of the Office of Community & Economic Development. Commissioner Brillson motioned to approach the Council. Commissioner Kora seconded. Motion carried.

Considered support for the newly elected maintenance director to approach the Council in regards to hiring a foreman. Commissioner Brillson motioned to approve. Commissioner Kora seconded. Motion carried.

New Business: Considered Resolution regarding enhanced Economic Development/Job Creation efforts through the Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED). Commissioner Brillson stated the format for the meetings will be changed with general public comment at the front end of the meeting then when an action item comes up that requires a vote the public will be allowed to approach the Commissioners and comment as well. Commissioner Brillson then read into the record the Resolution:

**RESOLUTION NO. _____ OF THE BOARD OF
LA PORTE COUNTY, INDIANA COMMISSIONERS**

WHEREAS, the Office of Economic Development (OED) was created by the Board of County Commissioners in 2013 and has been supported consistently by the La Porte County Council since that time, and

WHEREAS, the Office has provided a one-stop-shop for both developers and local companies looking for technical assistance and professional services on shovel-ready sites as well as existing industrial and commercial space; the OED counts among its successes landing new firms such as JBC Rail and Helena Chemical and has played a key role in job growth with increased employment opportunities at firms such as Van Air, Heartland Footwear, Harrison Electric, Kingsbury Elevator and as well as bringing back the critical job training opportunities available in a WorkOne office to Michigan City and initiating additional job training programs, and recently landing nationally recognized NorthPoint Development to bring jobs and opportunity to the long-vacant Roundy's refrigerated warehouse facility near Westville, and

WHEREAS, this Board wishes to recognize the efforts of previous Office of Economic Development Directors Dave Christian and Mike Seitz in helping to position the Office for future growth and recognizes the important role the Office has taken in advocating for a variety of quality of place initiatives for La Porte County, and

WHEREAS, this body believes it is important to continue to grow and enhance the role of the OED in both economic and community development and has today appointed former Economic Development Corporation of Michigan City (EDCMC) Director Anthony Rodriguez to be the new Director of the office, and

ORIGINAL

WHEREAS, this body believes that pairing Anthony Rodriguez, an experienced economic development professional who drove the EDCMC to create historic investment and job growth along with seasoned economic development professional Matt Reardon creates a “dream team” approach for La Porte County which can take this county to the next level of job creation and sustainable and smart growth; and

WHEREAS, this robust, team-centered approach can support local businesses so they can grow and remain competitive while encouraging investment by new developers and help induce new industrial and commercial prospects to locate in our county, and

WHEREAS, the county Redevelopment Commission (RDC) has now authorized three different TIF zones where job growth is being encouraged, which include Kingsbury Industrial Park (KIP), the I-94/421 Corridor and 39 North Conservancy District, and

WHEREAS, sufficient TIF revenues exist to permit the engagement of consultant Matt Reardon to be able to focus his efforts exclusively on the three TIF zones and the RDC is authorized under statute to engage consultants for economic development/job creation,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LA PORTE COUNTY THAT:

1. The Office of Economic Development is hereby re-named the La Porte County Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) to better recognize the place-making and quality of life initiatives that can emanate from such office in addition to economic development.
2. This Body endorses pairing the talents of Anthony Rodriguez who will now head the OECD with that of consultant Matt Reardon and the RDC is respectfully encouraged to consider engaging Mr. Reardon in a consulting capacity to work specifically on the county’s three TIF zones – namely - KIP, I-94/421 and 39 North.
3. This Body will present a budget to the LaPorte County Council at their January meeting to fund the Office of Community and Economic Development for 2019 and wishes to go on record in appreciation for the continued, sustained support of the County Council for various economic development/job creation initiatives since the Office was first established in 2013.

Commissioner Brillson motioned to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Kora seconded the motion.

Public Comment opened:

Tony Rodriguez, stated he is excited to be in his position as Director of Economic Development for La Porte County.

Dennis Metheny commented on bringing jobs into our area that pay higher wages.

Chris Throgmorton asked for the statute for the RDC. Attorney Shaw Friedman replied he will get that information to Chris.

Mike Schultz, La Porte County Assessor, reported he reached out to both Matt Reardon and Tony Rodriguez offering assistance if they needed it.

Commissioner Kora stated he would like to see the offices of Economic Development from Michigan City, La Porte and the county all working together, a team effort.

Attorney Shaw Friedman stated he located the Indiana Code 36-7-14 for Chris Throgmorton who requested it earlier.

Commissioner Brillson stated she had worked with Tony Rodriguez in the past and is looking forward to working with Matt Reardon as well. Commissioner Brillson motioned to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Kora seconded. Motion carried. ***Resolution 2019-1

Commissioner Comments: Commissioner Brillson stated this meeting sets the tone for her four year term. Honored and privileged to be here. Voters spoke and she listened along the yearlong campaign trail. Request for transparency, respect for the public and the voters, improving customer service, treating employees well, open communication with taxpayers, request for civility, and modeling a positive public discourse. Working on better communication within the Commissioners’ office. Tracking complaints that come in to the office and resolving them. Public comment will be in two places on the agenda. Comments before any vote action will be limited to 3 minutes. Comments can be submitted in writing as well. For those that want to get active on Boards and Commissions there will be an application online. Larry Levendowski, appointed as Maintenance Director, will be meeting with all Department Heads to get a “needs” assessment or punch list. Department Heads will be asked to do an internal audit of all county owned equipment, furniture and fixtures. Commissioner Brillson stated zoning laws need to be looked at in our county.

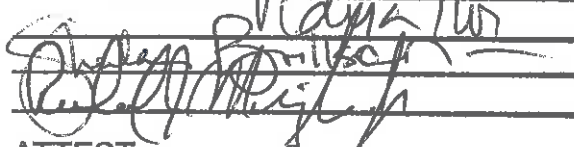
ORIGINAL

An issue on Schultz Road regarding sand mining had been brought to her attention. Commissioner Brillson requested Attorney Friedman to look at the history, legal documents, meetings, and the issue of sand mining in a residential neighborhood to determine what the next step would be to address the issue for the citizens that live in that area. Commissioner Kora asked Attorney Friedman if a Resolution is needed to address the sand mining issue. Attorney Friedman said a motion to direct his office to work with the departments involved with this matter. Sheriff Dept, Building Commissioner and any other departments. Commissioner Brillson motioned to direct Attorney Friedman to research all the information to bring the Commission up to speed to make good decisions going forward on this issue. Commissioner Kora seconded. Motion carried.

Commissioner Kora thanked the voters of La Porte County for electing him twice, first time in 2012 then again in 2016. Commissioner Kora said he is honored and humbled to be elected as President of the Board of Commissioners. Technology plays a huge part in today's communication. Commissioner Kora stated he is always available whether it be by phone, text or email, 24/7, 365 days of the year. Our county has a great group of employees who deliver great service. The Commissioners will meet on a regular basis with department heads and have the department heads report at the Commissioners meetings. We will be sure county government is efficient, effective and transparent. We have been elected to serve you, the voters of La Porte County. Happy New Year.

Commissioner Brillson motioned to adjourn at 10:50 am. Commissioner Kora seconded. Motion carried.

EXAMINED AND APPROVED BY THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
COUNTY OF LA PORTE, INDIANA
DATE ~~1-23-2019~~ 2-6-2019



ATTEST: _____ Auditor

LA PORTE COUNTY, INDIANA

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