

PORTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MONDAY, JANUARY 23rd, 2023
5:30 P.M.

(The entire meeting is available to watch on the Porter County website.)

The Regular meeting of the Porter County Board of Commissioners convened at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, January 23rd, 2023 in the Commissioners' Chambers of the Administration Center.

Those present were: Commissioners Laura Blaney, Barb Regnitz, Jim Biggs and County Attorney Scott McClure; Executive Administrative Asst. Melanie Massey and Recording Secretary Kathy Merle.

Call to Order/Pledge

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Payroll – January 20th, 2023.

Approval of Claims – January 12th and January 19th, 2023.

Approval of Minutes for Board of Finance January 10th, 2023.

Weights and Measures Monthly Report – December 16th, 2022 to January 15th, 2023.

Com. Regnitz, moved to approve the Consent Agenda, Com. Biggs, second, motion carried.

MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE – SCOT MACDONALD, DIRECTOR

ARTISTIC SERVICES AGREEMENT

VENUE RENTAL AGREEMENT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Amend Commissioners' Appointments to the following Boards:

Com. Biggs, This is some housekeeping. I am resigning from the Stormwater Advisory Board, Juvenile Justice Board and the Community Corrections.

Com. Biggs, moved to appoint Com. Blaney to the Stormwater Advisory Board, Juvenile Justice Board and the Community Corrections, Com. Regnitz, second, motion carried.

Com. Regnitz, I am resigning from EMA and 911.

Com. Regnitz, moved to appoint Jim Biggs to the EMA and 911 Boards, Com. Blaney, second, motion carried.

Com. Biggs, moved to appoint Com. Regnitz to the Child Protection Board and to the Center of Workforce Innovations, Com. Regnitz second, motion carried.

Correction to the Plan Commission Board – 1 Appointment (*Democrat affiliation residing in unincorporated Porter County.*) **The deadline will be February 2nd.******

Com. Regnitz, We found out that they need to be a resident in unincorporated Porter County.

Com Regnitz, I would like to revoke our appointment of Scott Williams, Com. Blaney, second, motion carried.

Com. Blaney, I nominate Pam Fish.

Com Biggs, I have no problems with that but I want to open it up again because we

messed up.

Correction to the Stormwater Advisory Board - 1 Appointment (Residing in unincorporated Porter County.) **The deadline will be February 2nd.**

Com. Regnitz, I move to revoke our appointment of Nicole Baker from the Stormwater Advisory Board, Com. Blaney, second, motion carried.

Citizen Appointments to the Board of Health.

Com. Blaney, I would like to reappoint Dr. Gasper, Susan Phelps and Martin Moeller. Martin Moeller is a business owner in town. He's been (Inaudible) for the past several years. Susan is a registered nurse and Dr. Gasper joined the Board at a time that we had a really hard time finding a doctor. They saw us through difficult waters with COVID.

Com. Biggs, Is there a second? The motion fails with no second. Speaking for myself I appreciate very much the time that the current Board members have put in. Laura is right that they were there during a very difficult time. These appointments come up periodically for a reason. I took a very hard long look at it. What jumped out at me is that we have 7 members of that Board and 5 of them reside in the City of Valparaiso. The 2 that don't reside right outside the City of Valparaiso. I just don't think that that is being very reflective of that being a county wide agency. I think it would be the most healthy for our county's health department is that we have people residing throughout our county not just primarily on one municipality. I just think that is healthy.

Com. Biggs, moved to approve Dr. Ron Michaels. He is a resident of Chesterton and a neurological surgeon and has 30 years of clinical experience, Com. Regnitz, second, motion carried.

Com. Blaney, Opposed.

Com. Biggs, moved to approve Robin Lane. Robin is an RN. She works in neuro ICU, she also works as a home health care nurse. She lives in Liberty Township. She has been a practicing nurse for 15 years, Com. Regnitz, second, motion carried.

Com. Blaney, Opposed.

Com. Biggs, moved to appoint Jessica Jepsen. Jessica holds an MBA and a BS in health care administration. She works for a global network of over 200 chiropractic offices and she's worked in her field for 20 years, Com. Regnitz, second, motion carried.

Com. Blaney, Opposed.

Com. Blaney, I would just like to welcome the new people. This was not personal. I just do not like to knock people off of the board that have been doing a good job and would like to continue with their service.

Com. Biggs, Again I too find it difficult to replace people that have been doing a good job. When it was so heavy with the representation of the City of Valparaiso, 5 of the 7 members reside in the City of Valparaiso I just can't support that.

NEW BUSINESS

COMMISSIONERS

A Contract Agreement between Dannielle Herald and Porter County Government for Grant Writing Services in the amount of \$60.00 per hour not to exceed an annual cost of \$21,000.00.

Com. Regnitz, moved to approve Dannielle Herald for Grant Writing Services, Com. Biggs, second, motion carried.

VLACD – Grimmer Contract.

Com. Biggs, Is this a renewal Scott?

Atty. McClure, No, the Valparaiso Lake Area Conservancy District is working on a grant. They received that grant. Since we are the lead from an OCRA standpoint with the State and the grant we approve it also. This has already been approved by Valpo Lakes Area Conservancy District and the grant will be paying for this.

Com. Biggs, It needs our approval?

Atty. McClure, It does.

Com. Regnitz, moved to approve the VLACD Grimmer Contract, Com. Blaney, second, motion carried.

AUDITOR KAREN MARTIN

A Legal Services Agreement between the Office of the Porter County Auditor and Adam J. Mindel at a rate of \$120.00 per hour.

Ms. Martin, This is an individual who has worked with the Assessor and the Auditor in the past with reference to any appeal processes or homestead or lineation between dividing a property. He has worked very well with the entities as well as the individuals within the departments. Since there is a good repertoire between the Assessor, the Auditor and the individuals that work with him I felt that it was necessary to keep the contract going.

Com. Blaney, moved to approve the Legal Contract with Adam J. Mindel, Com. Regnitz, second, motion carried.

Cender /Dalton - A Financial Consultant Annual Service Agreement with hourly rates as shown on Page 7.

Com. Biggs, I have no Page 7 so if you can please tell us those rates.

Ms. Martin, It all depends who is working with the department at the time. It can go from the director to all of the way through the...and I think our rate because we are working with Trista Hudson is \$145.00. What we are doing is making sure we are meeting all of our report deadlines. The situation is the highest amount would be \$275.00. The lowest amount would be \$75.00. This is working with GAP, the Gateway and the ARP funds (Inaudible) to make sure all of those reports are being done in a timely fashion.

Com. Regnitz, moved to approve Cender/Dalton Financial Consultant Annual Service Agreement, Com. Blaney, second, motion carried.

HEALTH DEPT. – SHEILA PAUL, DIRECTOR

A request to hold a blood drive with the American Red Cross at the Admin. Building in Room 102A on Monday, March 6th and Thursday, May 4th, 2023 from 9:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. They will promote the event via email and social media to all County employees to help encourage participation.

Com Biggs, We have this every year don't we?

Ms. Paul, We haven't had it for several years but to my understanding in the past it was every year. You did it throughout the year, more than just twice. This is just us trying to build partnerships back up. Of course a lot of things went by the way side during COVID. So we thought this was a good opportunity. I think they use to do it upstairs so 102A is kind of a logical space.

Com. Blaney, moved to approve the Blood Drive with the American Red Cross, Com. Regnitz, second, motion carried.

An Agreement between the Health Dept. and Porter County Fairgrounds & Expo Center for a Mass Prophylaxis Point of Dispensing site.

Ms. Paul, In the case of an emergency for example this was developed after 911 2001 through Homeland Security. If we have a need to let's say an anthrax where we have to distribute prophylaxis or medication to people quickly. We would like to utilize the Expo to quickly get a lot of people through. We have agreements also with the Duneland YMCA, St. Mary's in Kouts and Woodland Park.

Com. Regnitz, moved to approve the agreement between the Health Dept. and Porter County Fairgrounds & Expo Center to be used as a dispensing site, Com. Blaney, second, motion carried.

CORONER CYNDI DYKES

Porter Hospital, LLC d/b/a Northwest Health Porter – An Extension to Hospital Services Agreement.

Ms. Dykes, This is to continue the fees that we are paying now. We pay \$225.00. None of these fees have changed. They didn't raise any of their price. To use their radiology for each autopsy the film is \$50.00 and the CT scans are \$250.00. Radiology films and the CT scans aren't done routinely. It just depends on what the case is.

Com. Regnitz, moved to approve the Hospital Services agreement, Com. Blaney, second, motion carried.

E911 – DEBBY GUNN, DIRECTOR

RAVE - A Presentation on Emergency Text Messages.

Com. Biggs, First explain to the audience what RAVE is.

Ms. Gunn, RAVE is a mobile safety alerting system and there's a lot of different facets that RAVE actually provides on their platform we utilize. Specifically I'd like to introduce to the Board as well as the citizens of Porter County so you can be familiar with how the 911 Center works. First I'd like to introduce is the RAVE 911 Suite. You'll see on the screen here first of all I wanted to put up there the website where anyone can sign up. This is a free profile provided to us with our contract with RAVE for all citizens of Porter County. The information that a user profile consists of is never shared with anyone, other websites. No one can basically try to get people's information from that. Also it's kept private and secure and what this does is it adds another level of information for First Responders. So on these forms and I'll be brief about it this is a sign up Forum. Those are some brief facts about it. This is the user profile view so when you go in and you sign up for a Smart 911 profile you can include obviously your address, landline phone numbers, if you have any cell phone numbers, pets in the residents, medical conditions. Specific information about the residents that would help First Responders when they have an emergency at your home. For example even emergency contacts can be added. This is vital and it's underutilized in this County I readily admit. For example if you have a Smart 911 profile and you've associated your cell phone with that and you are at Walmart and you have you're starting to have chest pains and you call 9-1-1 and you're unable to articulate the problem to the dispatcher. The Smart 911 profile dispatcher will automatically be able to know if you've included that in your information that this patient has congestive heart failure, this patient has emergency contact information. They'd like their daughter contacted. This is just very helpful to responders. Especially those that are in route. You have medical medics in route at the time and they'll know exactly that this is potentially the problem. That's just one aspect. There's many more that it encompasses but that's why I'd like to really see more utilization of this.

Com. Regnitz, Can I ask how do you sign up?

Ms. Gunn, I'm glad you asked that question. Every six months it's not intrusive at all you won't be bothered. Like I said they don't share your information RAVE will send you an email asking you to either confirm or update your information. And that's really the extent of the obligation. It's nationwide and I'd like to share this briefly. RAVE mobile safety was just purchased by Motorola Solutions, so I am hopeful that it will even expand. I spoke with some representatives this past week. They are expanding into new territory with RAVE. Some of you may not be aware but we have been a RAVE customer since 2011. Porter County was really a

flagship county. So they're eager when they launch their new products to contact us because of that relationship. So that's interesting. This is a 911 dispatch for you can see here this is the view that a 911 dispatcher will get. What is evident to everyone there's a yellow banner that is alert notifications that the dispatcher will receive. You can click on that as a dispatcher and get more expensive information regarding that particular Smart 911 profile. That's also part of the 911 Suite. And I think this is very interesting especially as a dispatcher, this is ravefacility.com. It acts similar to the Smart 911 profile, however this is based as stated on facilities. I'd like to give a shout out to Matt Melton. Matt Melton established all Porter County buildings, they all have their own ready facility profiles. I'll say this there's only 38 facility profiles in Porter County. This is something that I've always liked and desired to grow. I think that if we had more exposure to this we could really sign up schools and other businesses.

Com. Biggs, Schools aren't signed up on this?

Ms. Gunn, No they're not. As you can imagine right now technology is booming so there's a lot of competing technology for things like the schools. I could go into great detail but this is something where schools can provide their floor plans and if someone calls from the school if it's a cell phone that doesn't have the profile but it's within the geo fence of that location this RAVE facility profile pops up for the dispatcher. That's a phenomenal tool.

Com. Biggs, So the value of that would be without being too graphic since we have children in the audience but if somebody were in the building that shouldn't be in the building doing something they shouldn't be doing they were in a particular part of the building the blueprint tell the SWAT teams or whoever's responding know exactly where that's at in that building when otherwise they probably wouldn't know.

Ms. Gunn, Absolutely. We do have floor plans for schools in the 911 Center. This is something that is accessible immediately because it pops up when someone was in that geo fence calls. As you can imagine it expedites our whole process in the 911 Center. There's a lot of information you can put here as well. One of the things that I'm really intrigued by from a 9-1-1 Dispatch Center perspective is you can add key holder information in this. That is vital information. Say for example you have an alarm going off somewhere and responders show up and they need access or there's an alarm that needs to be deactivated. Right now we have an antiquated system. This would really put the onus on those facilities or those people who manage those facilities to maintain their information. So we wouldn't be accessing data that's 15 years old and completely obsolete. We would have at six months updated information. It's a really nice

function that we are offered by RAVE. I went a little bit ahead of myself. It's searchable. This is how a dispatcher would access the information just by...it's all alphabetical. We can put in a facility's name and figure out information based on that facility without actually it having been generated to the 911 Center itself. The second aspect of RAVE. These work in conjunction with one another. I'd like to tell you a little bit about the alerting. We have several different ways. What I did is just a screenshot here of the ways that our Center disseminates information to the public. If you see up there you have text, email, voice, RSS, Twitter, Facebook, iPods and Smart911. Essentially all of those aspects of alerting the public are opt in. To back up a little bit with your Smart profile. You're given an option when you sign up for your Smart profile of opting into certain alerts beach hazards, weather hazards different things like that or you can opt out of them. I found my own personal one I like the weather. Everything else was superfluous but its user preference. The one that I really wanted to address today so that we can kind of understand how alerts are sent in this county is iPods. iPods is actively created by FEMA and it really was created for emergency purposes. Specifically I'll give you an example that we've utilized it for when you have a missing person. This basically bypasses all of the opt-in options and sends an alert to a designated group of people that the Dispatch Center, EMA, those who have access to the software can establish. It stands for integrated public alert and warning system. This county is an IPlus Pod County, which is interesting not all counties are. We're a collaborative operating group, which means that we fall under that canopy of a larger scope of notification if need be. I created an example State Road 49 and Indian Boundary Road you have a missing person. I made a radius. I showed how we can build identification points in the county by radius. I created my point of State Road 49 and Indian Boundary and I gave it a two and a half mile radius. What that does is anyone that is within that and we can establish that obviously arbitrarily anyone that's within that radius would get a notification before they actually get to the point. With this for example missing female age this description or whatever on foot last scene. However, descriptive we want they would automatically without having to be opted in to any of those alerts they would get that. This sort of usurps the standard opt-in. This is something that we know as an emergent nature. For example if you had a hazardous material leak and you needed to let somebody know. You'd want to notify masses without having to be restricted just to the opt-in groups. This is where you

have the targeted alerts that are backed. We have a couple different ways we can do it by radius. I showed on the left or also by points on the right and I just arbitrarily pick some points here. The central location was this building and then I put just specific points for maybe officer checkpoints or something to notify people. We can really customize it I guess is what I'm trying to relay. This is basically just the platform that RAVE offers. Like I said it's pretty robust in what it does offer. I think even what we have now are really good tools that we just need to market a little bit better and get more people involved.

Com. Biggs, I'd appreciate it if you take some time to come back before us with a couple of recommendations on how we might be able to do that. Thank you.

HIGHWAY DEPT. – JIM POLAREK, DIRECTOR

A Request for an Additional Appropriation Fund #1176 Acct. #4420 Motor Vehicles in the amount of \$300,000.00. Annual additional. Lowboy Semi Tractor and Steel Drum Roller. Restricted expense.

A Request for an Additional Appropriation Fund #1176 Acct. #2362 Bituminous in the amount of \$1,500,000.00. Annual additional. Chip Seal, Crack Seal and Paving. Restricted expense.

A Request for an Additional Appropriation Fund #1176 Acct. #2360 Aggregates in the amount of \$200,000.00. Annual additional. Stone for Chip Seal.

A Request for an Additional Appropriation Fund #1169 Acct. #4540 Other Equipment in the amount of \$70,000.00. Annual additional. Mowers, Plows, Bobcat attachments, etc.

A Request for an Additional Appropriation Fund #1169 Acct. #3950 Contractual Services in the amount of \$150,000.00. Annual additional. Road Stripping.

Mr. Polarek, The DLGF advises us to only budget at 80% of our annual revenue from the previous 12 months. When we're talking about a \$6 million annual revenue from MVH we only budget roughly \$5 million. So every year there's going to be a million dollars that never gets budgeted. Then we also never use our \$5 million budget to its full extent. Every year we have excess funds and their answer is to come back and do an additional in the spring so that's why every year we come back with these additional.

Com. Biggs, For the audience sake this is equipment that we have been discussing with the Highway Dept. for months that is sorely needed. It makes it almost impossible to do the job that we're expected to do by the residents without it.

Com. Regnitz, moved to approve the Request for Additional Appropriations, Com. Blaney, second, motion carried.

A Request to order 4 New Mack Dump Trucks for 2024 delivery (2 @ \$298,116.00 and 2 @ \$324,879.00).

Mr. Polarek, The 4 Mack Dump Trucks. Twelve of our current dump trucks that we have the control systems for the hydraulics are outdated. When they break we can't even get parts for them. The upgrade to the new system is about \$20,000.00 so we would be looking at putting \$20,000.00 worth of controls into about a \$35,000.00. Right now the way the economy is and manufacturing hopefully if we order them now we may see them by next summer with our fingers crossed. The reason there is a price difference the two higher priced ones have tandem axles which means they have two axles on the back instead of just the single one that we have now. We will be able to carry more materials with those two trucks. We also started going back to regular cable controls instead of all the computers. After 20 years of the computer controls in these dump trucks we realized that it was very expensive to maintain. We are going to back to the old fashioned cables and levers.

Com. Biggs, Did we price these out?

Mr. Polarek, That is through Source Well. I explained to you the State of Minnesota set the program up years ago. All of these manufacturers give their best government price. You look at what you want and the price is already agreed upon with them through the government.

A Request to purchase a John Deere Boom Mower from Tiger Mower in the amount of \$215,501.20.

Mr. Polarek, The John Deere tractor as you know last year we had transmission problems with our current boom mower which is about 15 years old. We were without it all summer. We can't go another summer without a boom mower.

A Request to purchase a Dynapac CC6200 Steel Drum Roller from Westside Tractor in the amount of \$105,000.00.

Mr. Polarek, Dynapac roller order is a used piece of equipment. We checked around trying to find used ones and this was the best deal we could find.

Com. Regnitz, moved to approve all purchase requests, Com. Blaney, second, motion carried.

PUPPY MILL UPDATE

Com. Biggs, Laura do you have an update on the puppy mill?

Com. Blaney, Scott do you want to where we are on this.

Atty. McClure, Since the last meeting I've dug into some of the other cities and counties around. At the City of Indianapolis and Carmel to name a few. There was another one you left on my desk today that I looked at. Ultimately what it is looking at doing is the directions have been pretty simple and straightforward. The retail sale is really what we're looking at from puppies. To be clear that is only in unincorporated. We don't control cities and towns and it is not. It is excluding farmers or people in their residence that are potentially raising puppies for sale. This is the retail sale of a finite list of young animals, puppies and kittens.

Com. Blaney, Breeders are protected?

Atty. McClure, Correct. If you live on a farm or live in the country or live in unincorporated Porter County and you are a dog breeder this ordinance is not intended nor will it affect you. It is the retail sale which means a retail business storefront that is selling these things.

Com. Blaney, That does not include rescues and shelters correct?

Atty. McClure, The retail sale for profit.

Com. Blaney, Do you think we will have something to talk about by our next meeting?

Atty. McClure, Yes.

Com. Biggs, This sounds like something we're going to do and I think it is a great idea. I'm glad Laura brought it up to us. We will probably have an ordinance in front of us by our next meeting.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PORTER COUNTY, INDIANA

Jim Biggs

Barb Regnitz

Laura M. Blaney

Attest: _____
Karen Martin, Auditor