The Steuben County Commissioners met at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, January 21, 2020, in the Commissioners’ Room of the Steuben County Community Center. Present this day were Commissioners Ronald Smith, James Crowl and Lynne Liechty. Also present were Donald Stuckey, County Attorney, Ruth Beer, Steuben County Councilwoman and Kim Meyers, Steuben County Auditor.

Crystal Dadura, HR Director, on behalf of the Safety Committee, addressed the Commissioners regarding space heaters in County Buildings. Ms. Dadura said the Safety Committee met a couple weeks ago, conducted inspections and would like to propose that the Commissioners take a look at the space heater issue and allow employees to utilize space heaters that meet specific criteria. James Crowl asked who would monitor and police these actions. Ms. Dadura said currently the Building Managers do; however, there have been circumstances where people are bringing their space heaters back to the office, even after confiscation. Ronald Smith asked who purchases the heaters. Ms. Dadura said the employees purchase them. Commissioner Smith said no one is going ‘monitor’ these heaters unless Gary Fair goes around and does it. He said people will turn them on and hopefully turn them off when they leave for the day. James Crowl said he wants anyone that has a heater to sign an affidavit that they are responsible for the action of that space heater. Ms. Dadura said she agrees. Kim Meyers said the County is still liable.

Gary Fair, Community Center Building Manager, said he believes all of the ungrounded outlets have been eliminated throughout the building. Mr. Fair said an extension cord cannot be used with the space heaters. Ronald Smith said he wants the employees to be comfortable. Mr. Fair agreed and he said he has increased the temperature in the Community Center and Jace Crozier has done the same thing in the Courthouse. Gary Fair said the windows leak and there is no insulation in the walls.

Crystal Dadura said all Building Managers have done their due diligence, they've exhausted all options and there are employees that are using blankets. She thinks instead of saying no against everything, if specific criteria is approved and specific heaters can be used, she thinks the risk will be decreased.

Tami Sumney, IT Director, said she walked into her office and it was 66 degrees today. She said the thermostats are hard set at 72 degrees and are locked; however, there are some offices that are really hot and some are really cold. She said it’s a big issue at the Annex as well.

Crystal Dadura said if space heaters are used incorrectly, they are a fire hazard; however, the fact is that people are still using them whether or not there is a policy that allows them. Ms. Dadura said the Safety Committee is more than willing to help with oversight, with the Building Manger’s help.

James Crowl said there are three (3) space heaters that have been recommended. Ms. Dadura said those can be used or if the employee already has a space heater then specific criteria must be met. A sticker would then be placed on the unit approving the use of the unit by a Safety Committee Representative.

Alicia van Ee, Health Department, said she feels the responsibility is also on the Department Heads for those that know someone in their Department has a space heater. Ms. van Ee said it would be on the Department Heads as well, not just the Building Managers and Safety Committee Representatives.

Bill Schmidt asked if the County’s Insurance Company has an issue with the space heaters. Ronald Smith said it isn’t a big issue if it is policed. Lynne Liechty said they are aware there are instances where the heaters have been left on over the weekend. Ronald Smith apologizes for the fact that there are spaces where it is not comfortable for people to work, it is just substandard heating and cooling in the buildings. Gary Fair said he doesn’t remember the Safety Committee voting on this. Ms. Dadura said that this was proposed, discussed and was absolutely something the Safety Committee chose to do. James Crowl said the Department Heads and Safety Committee are going to be responsible for these heaters. Ronald Smith said there needs to be some kind of track record proving the heaters are being monitored and when. James Crowl recommended placing a log on the door and they can date and time it on their way out.
Tami Sumney said she wonders how much of employee wages are being lost because they are not productive enough in a cold environment. She said she sits in her office half the winter with her winter coat and gloves on. She said she doesn’t want to turn on her heater, but sometimes she has no choice.

Kim Meyers, Auditor, said she has nothing to do with the Safety Committee; however, she doesn’t know how this is going to be enforced. She said they are not going to have time to check everyone’s offices to make sure the heaters are turned off.

Ronald Smith made a motion that the Commissioners grant County Employees, under the parameters of the Safety Committee’s Guidelines, permission to possess personal space heaters only when the Safety Committee has worked out a failsafe way of giving proper supervision to each heating unit. Failure to do so will disqualify that building and/or department from further use of the heating units. Commissioner Smith further stated that once a mechanism is in place to provide a failsafe type of operation, supervision and monitoring by each Department the information of who will be doing it and how it is to be done should be submitted to the Commission Board with the reports available for review upon request. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Alicia van Ee, Health Department, requested permission to purchase a laptop for preparedness efforts. James Crowl made a motion to approve Ms. van Ee’s purchase request. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Kathy Armstrong, JDAI, submitted information on two (2) Grant Applications. Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve the Grant Application to the Department of Education for a Youth Assistance Program. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

James Crowl made a motion to approve the Grant Application for JDAI through the Department of Corrections. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Tami Sumney, IT Director, requested to purchase twenty-one (21) computers for various departments. Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve the low quote from PCM-G in the amount of $33,106.32. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Pam Feller, Probation, requested permission to purchase a laptop in the amount of $1,651.11. James Crowl made a motion to approve that request. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

James Crowl made a motion to approve the claims submitted for payment this day totaling $375,830.08. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve the minutes from the Commissioners’ Meeting on January 6, 2020 and from the Administrative/Emergency Expenditure Meeting on January 13, 2020. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

The Commissioners signed the minutes from the December 19, 2019, Commissioners’ Meeting for the Index Book, which were approved at the prior meeting.

Rae Delaney, Payroll, submitted the January 17, 2020 payroll in the amount of $429,677.18 for approval. Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve the January 17, 2020 payroll. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Ambulance Billing Services submitted write offs in the amount of $4,056.15 for approval. Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve those write offs. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.
Mike Sevits, Annex Maintenance, submitted quotes for the LED Retrofitting at the Annex. James Crowl made a motion to approve the low quote from Ross Electrical Contracting in the amount of $10,600.00. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Lynne Liechty thanked James Crowl for donating his time and equipment at the County Park. Commissioner Liechty said the total donation equaled $9,280.00.

Breann Fink, Literacy Coalition, requested permission to use the Community Center Auditorium for their Annual Drama Camp during the weeks of July 6, 2020 and July 13, 2020 from 12:30-4:30 p.m. Ms. Fink also requested to use the Community Center Parking Lot on Saturday, May 2, 2020 from 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. to park cars during a field trip. Erin Schiffli stated that Gary Fair informed her that May 2 is the first day of the Farmer’s Market; however, the field trip participants could park their cars in the Martha and Wall Parking Lot. Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve the use of the Community Center Auditorium for the Drama Camp and the approve the use of the Martha and Wall Parking Lot on Saturday, May 2. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes. It was further stated that perhaps signs can be posted on the premises so the field trip participants know where to park.

The Commissioners signed plats for Tasker Hill and Hewes Heights.

Brett Hays, NICC, requested permission to purchase thirty-eight (38) mattresses for Community Corrections. James Crowl made a motion to accept the low quote from Indiana Correctional Industries in the amount of $1,710.00. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Mr. Hays also requested to have Gibson’s Heating and Plumbing install toilets that were purchased on Amazon. He said that the cost for the installation would be $466.00. Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve the toilet installation. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Brett Hays stated that the 2004 Express Van needs a new transmission. Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve the low quote from Bill’s Towing in the amount of $2,097.36. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Mr. Hays requested the Commissioners pay for half of a Delta T Invoice in the amount of $270.00. James Crowl made a motion to approve splitting the Delta T Bill. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Mr. Hays also submitted quotes for repairs to the downspouts on the building. James Crowl made a motion to approve the low quote from PM Roofing Systems. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes. Brett Hays also recommended adding a time stipulation to the contract. The Commissioners told Mr. Hays that he could decide what that time stipulation would be.

Rick Bristle came to the Commissioners regarding a culvert on 700 N, Fremont. Mr. Bristle submitted information to the Commissioners to explain the issues that area is experiencing with water. He said the water goes to a wetland and then runs into a detention area and county tile. Mr. Bristle said the tile is too small for the volume of water so the water backs up into the subdivision and past the detention pond. He said it also goes into Blackman Prairie and the street is flooded and underwater.

Mr. Bristle said he spoke to Larry Gilbert, Surveyor, regarding this issue as well. He said this issue gets worse every year and thinks it is a combination of the culverts and the County tile which needs to be taken across the property owned by Midwest Land Holdings LLC and dumped into Fish Lake. James Crowl said the flow of the water would have to be changed and that would involve going through the Drainage Board.

Jennifer Sharkey said she met with Mr. Bristle to look at the issue and her concern with upsizing the culvert is taking water from one property owner to put it on another property owner. Mr. Bristle said he does not want to create headaches for anyone else, but there has to be a fix. Ms. Sharkey said it looked like it needs to be in some sort of tile system or it would add more water to the existing problem in Blackman Prairie.
January 21, 2020 Commissioners’ Meeting Continued

Mr. Bristle said he had the lot, which is now half underwater, sold and a $300,000.00 house scheduled to be built, but the buyers backed out of the sale. He said he also feels bad for the people in Blackman Prairie.

Rick Bristle also discussed having CR 700 N chip and sealed. He said Larry Collins had the road chip and sealed all the way up to his driveway. The entrance to Phase I of Shawnee Trails is another 500 feet and he would like to chip and seal that. Jennifer Sharkey said that would have to be brought before the Commissioners because at this time the Highway Department does not have a conversion program in place. Mr. Bristle said he would pay for it himself if he has to, but he doesn’t want to have to do that. The Commissioners requested that chip and seal cost quotes be brought back to them.

Frank Charlton, County Park Superintendent, informed the Commissioners that he is moving forward with the credit card machine for the Park. He said he is looking into the same company that Brett Hays uses. Mr. Charlton was reminded that he still needs to bring a Contract to the Commissioners for approval.

Mr. Charlton also stated that he is still looking into the LED signs and is getting quotes.

Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve the 2020 Seasonal Billing and Electrical Deposit Letter. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Mara Emerick, Event Center Coordinator, discussed the Amended Event Center Contract. Ms. Emerick recommends that the Commissioners offer the Event Center to Lessee’s for an entire weekend at a reduced rate of $2,500.00 and $1,000.00 for Non-Profit Groups. James Crowl made a motion to approve the full weekend rate and the Amended Contract. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Ms. Emerick also suggested renting the Event Center at a cost of $1,000.00 for two (2) days for the Craft Fair. The Commissioners agreed with that amount.

Jennifer Sharkey, Highway Engineer, submitted Ridenour Farms Utility Permit #2749RC for irrigation and NIPSCO Utility Permits #2867, #2868 and #2869 for approval. Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve the Utility Permits. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Ms. Sharkey informed the Commissioners that the final change orders for the CR 200 N/827 Project are being wrapped up. She said there is a total of eight (8) change orders, two (2) of which have already been approved, but the remainder have to be approved. Ms. Sharkey stated that there are enough funds available to cover these change orders. Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve those change orders. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Jennifer Sharkey discussed Bike Trail maintenance opportunities with the City of Angola and the DNR. She said that currently the City of Angola handles the mowing and the plowing of Phase I at a cost of $10,000.00. She said that the DNR is willing to mow Phase II if the County was able to arrange for plowing services of Phase II. Ms. Sharkey said the City of Angola is willing to offer plowing services for Phase II in the amount of $8,000.00. She said there may be a way to set up the Contract per snow event or a not to exceed amount. She said the current options available are:

a. $18,000.00 – Plowing and mowing services for Phase I and II with a combination of the City of Angola and the DNR.
b. $10,000.00 – Plowing and mowing services for Phase I only with the City of Angola
c. $20,500.00 – Plowing and mowing services for Phase I and II with the City of Angola

Ms. Sharkey recommends partnering with the DNR since this is a project that everyone has worked on together. Ted Bohman said they have been working together trying to come up with a solution and the DNR would, with right of entry approval onto County ground, would maintain that section of the trail like they maintain the Bike Trail inside of Pokagon. He said they would mow, trim and remove leaves from Phase II of the Trail from the Park to Zesto’s. James Crowl made a motion to approve the collaboration with the DNR and the City of Angola in the amount of $18,000.00 for plowing and mowing services. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.
Ms. Sharkey submitted a document for the Community Crossings Grant that requires supplementary signatures. Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve and sign the supplementary signatures document. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Jennifer Sharkey submitted reimbursement vouchers for the Bridge Inspections. James Crowl made a motion to approve those reimbursement vouchers. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Donald Schuller, 740 Lane 301 Lake George, came to the Commissioners regarding drainage issues on 150 W. Ms. Sharkey stated that they held off on a culvert on 150 W until further coordination could be done with the Surveyor’s Office. She said they knew there was a drainage situation up there so she reached out to the Toll Road for their plans with their facilities in that area because it looked as if culverts were going under the Toll Road, then go further south through a wetland area and across SR 120 and then into Snow Lake. She said she is starting with the Toll Road and see if that is an outlet for Long Beach so they are still doing exploratory and investigative work at this time.

Mr. Schuller stated the drain tile under CR 150 is lower than the outlet of Long Beach Lake. He said there is a vertical pipe that is supposed to be for the dam and perhaps it is plugged or capped because their back yards are flooded. Mr. Schuller said water keeps running out of that high area down onto CR 150 and it is constant, but they have no idea where the water is coming from.

Jennifer Sharkey said the garages located on Lane 301 were starting to flood and the boards were pulled which brought more water towards the road way. That area is where a Highway Driver was going to request for a pipe to be put in; however, that would take the water to Long Beach where there is already flooding issues.

Mr. Schuller said when the 20’ long and 18’’ diameter pipe comes out of Long Beach Lake it drops down about 8’ into a ravine and there is no way that could back it up. He said it is because the tile is too tall. When the lake was built, the pipe was put in higher than what the drainage tile was under the road so that tile needs to be lower. He said someone is adding water to the system because they are continually getting water, more than they should.

James Crowl said Larry Gilbert tried to find the pipe that Mr. Schuller speaks of, but he couldn’t locate it. Ms. Sharkey said the Highway Department was not able to find a pipe under 150 either. Donald Schuller said he would show them where it is located.

The Steuben County Theatre submitted a request to use the Community Center Auditorium on Friday, April 3 and Friday, April 4 and for a fee waiver of the rental of the Auditorium. James Crowl made a motion to waive the rental fee; however, the deposit and custodial fees must be paid. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Lynne Liechty stated that Gary Fair approached her regarding the seating in the Auditorium. James Crowl suggested getting quotes on everything that needs to be done.

Donald Stuckey stated that he is working on the Moeller easement regarding the North EMS property.

Gary Fair submitted two invoices from Delta T for approval. James Crowl made a motion to approve Invoice #FSM-5065 in the amount of 1,380.56 and Invoice #FSM-5069 in the amount of $340.00. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Lynne Liechty made a motion to reappoint Ronald Smith, Carter Snider, Hitesh Patel, Michael Votaw and Tom Peet to the Innkeepers Tax Commission. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

The Commissioners received the following correspondence: Ryan L. Daniel, Mayor of Columbia City re: Upcoming Caucus Meeting; Kate Virag NEIndiana re: National Media Result: Chicago Tribune; Janel Meyer
January 21, 2020 Commissioners’ Meeting Continued

SCSWCD re: Approved Meeting Minutes; Indiana Soybean Alliance re: ISA Infrastructure Preservation Program; Joy Hudson HPG Network re: Mayors & Commissioners Caucus; Meredith Camp Indiana LTAP re: PASER 2020.

STEUBEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

_____________________________________________
Ronald L. Smith, President, South District

_____________________________________________
James A. Crowl, Vice President, Middle District

_____________________________________________
Lynne Liechty, North District

Attest:  __________________________________
Kim Meyers, Steuben County Auditor