The Steuben County Commissioners met at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, July 15, 2019, 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 Ruth Beer, Steuben County Councilwoman and Kim Meyers, Steuben County Auditor.

The Commissioners signed Penner Road and Marsh View Plats.

James Crowl said he would like to congratulate Randy Strebig and the Airport. Commissioner Crowl said he was out to see the plane on Friday and he was able to speak to each one of crew members. He said the crew had nothing but great things to say about the Airport and the Community. They said the event was an absolute success and they would love to come back again. Randy Strebig, BoAC, thanked Commissioner Crowl and said that the crew visits a lot of places and they have never received a reception like they received here. Mr. Strebig said they had a very nice time and it was a great opportunity to have a community event at the airport.

Randy Strebig submitted financial reports to the Commissioners. Mr. Strebig said they are right on track and there are no red flags or concerns at this time. He said the two (2) big projects being paid by the Airport Improvement Fund have been delayed by rain.

Mr. Strebig said that next year will be more interesting with comparisons since this is the first year with the QuickBooks software.

He also reported that the tank inspections have been done and there were no major findings.

Randy Strebig reported they are working on discovering the obstructed drain tile that runs to the property. He said they found at least one collapse in a large drain and it is not a County Drain. Mr. Strebig said when the excavator is back on site, he will ask to dig up the obstructed area and figure out the situation because a sink hole appears between the taxiway and the runway in the field every once in a while. Mr. Strebig stated they plan on checking with the FAA to see if grants are available for drainage issues. Lynne Liechty asked if this issue could be brought to the Drainage Board. James Crowl said if it is not a taxable drain, it doesn’t fall under the Drainage Board’s Jurisdiction.

Mr. Strebig reported that the BoAC opened bids on the Obstruction Removal Project. He said they had two (2) bids for the project and the information was sent to the Consultant. Mr. Strebig stated the Consultant made a recommendation to move forward with the low bid from MTM Enterprises. He said the total project cost was approximately $231,000.00 and the engineers estimate was $284,000.00. Mr. Strebig said the federal grant is funded, but the appropriate paperwork needs to be done to move forward. He also stated that the work cannot be done until after October due to an environmental issue with a species of Bat that nests in the trees. Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve the BoAC to move forward with MTM Enterprises for the Obstruction Removal Project. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Randy Strebig said he would like to thank Todd Gorman for serving on the Board of Aviation. Mr. Strebig said Mr. Gorman had a career change and it would not permit him to attend board meetings. He said he would like to thank Mr. Gorman publicly for his service and appreciates everything he did for the BoAC. Ronald Smith requested that Erin Schiffli draft a letter to Mr. Gorman thanking him for his service on the BoAC.

Mr. Strebig explained that all of the expenses for the event that was held at the Airport was paid for by donations. He said the Freedom of Flight Foundation exists purely on the donations and generosity of others whom love their story, love what they do and make it possible for them to fly around. Mr. Strebig clarified that the County did not have to pay for anything for this event.

Jennifer Sharkey, Highway Engineer, submitted a reimbursement voucher for construction inspection services on the 200 N/SR 827 Project. James Crowl made a motion to approve the reimbursement voucher. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.
Ms. Sharkey informed the Commissioners that the Archeological Report was approved on the CR 200 N Phase II Project. She also submitted a reimbursement voucher for preliminary engineering. Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve the reimbursement voucher. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Ms. Sharkey stated that paving should start this week on the Bike Trail Phase II. She said they are targeting the end of this month for completion.

Jennifer Sharkey informed the Commissioners that she met with the Roundabout Project Consultant on July 9 regarding the Contract. She said they also requested guidance on the center portion of the of the roundabout. Ms. Sharkey recommends low maintenance; however, it would be nice to have something decorative there since it is a gateway intersection.

Ms. Sharkey reported the Local Road Safety Plan will be delayed a little bit with the current vacancy in the GIS Department.

Ms. Sharkey reported that she and Erin Schiffli have received correspondence from individuals on the bridge structure on CR 400 W between second and third basin of Crooked Lake. She said the residents are looking to do an independent engineering study. Ms. Sharkey said it was suggested to the homeowners last year that they get some sort of preliminary engineering study done on the bridge so they would have an approximate cost of the improvements. Ms. Sharkey indicated those improvements, if any, would be paid for by the Crooked Lake Association and/or by the Homeowners. James Crowl said there is nothing wrong with the bridge. Ms. Sharkey stated she did provide the pre-qualified consultant list from INDOT’s website and she highlighted the consultants that have done Steuben County Bridge Inspections during the last ten (10) years. She said at this point, it is now in the Homeowner’s hands.

Jennifer Sharkey reported that a property owner on the south east side of 700 S near I-69 wanted to have the State relinquish some of the right of way that is there. Ms. Sharkey said most of it was cleaning up the title work but she met with INDOT and the Surveyor to make sure the County retained right of way that would be needed to address the steep slopes on 700 S.

Ms. Sharkey also informed the Commissioners that a property owner on 660 N/Van Guilder is interested in constructing a Propane Distribution Center. She said it would be a seasonal business from mid-November to mid-March with about one (1) to two (2) semis a week. Ms. Sharkey said there are some concerns with this location because CR 660 N isn’t built for that type of traffic and Van Guilder is a No Thru Truck route. She said if they wanted to locate there, they would be responsible for the road upgrade. Ms. Sharkey said the feasibility of the intersection and the turning radius at CR 660 N and Van Guilder is tight so investigation would have to be done there. She also said the Ordinance for Van Guilder Road would have to be modified in order to allow the business to have the access route. James Crowl asked if the owners have gone through Planning and Zoning. Jennifer Sharkey said the property is in the jurisdiction of the Town of Fremont and the Town is requesting a letter of non-objection from the highway Department. James Crowl said having semis on that road is unacceptable. Ms. Sharkey said she would reach out to the individual and see if they would like to move forward with the improvements or look for a different location.

Jennifer Sharkey said the Historic Designation Hearing on the Lime Lake/Lake Gage Bridge is taking place on Wednesday. She said she plans on taking the letter from the Commissioners to that meeting and will help answer any questions that may be asked. James Crowl said there is nothing wrong with the bridge and it is not historical.

Ms. Sharkey said on CR 700 E at Clear Lake there are high water signs and the Town of Clear Lake asked if they could have permission to activate those signs because sometimes the Highway Department is delayed on getting there when a call comes in. The Commissioners said that is the Highway Department’s decision.

Jennifer Sharkey stated she spoke with the DNR about dams in general, but the Lake Minifenokee Dam was discussed. Ms. Sharkey said the maintenance and improvements to the dam is the responsibility of the property owners and/or the Association. She said the DNR does require dams be inspected every two (2) to five (5) years,
but they do not regulate what is done. Ms. Sharkey said she believes it was inspected eight (8) years ago and it was rated poorly at that time.

She said they also spoke about the Nevada Mills Dam which is a DNR regulated and maintained structure. Ms. Sharkey said the Lake George Dam is the responsibility of the Association. She said the DNR asked if the County needed to have a roadway go over that structure because if not, the County could cul-de-sac at the east side and then have the dam structure separate. Ms. Sharkey said they would have to look at the travel patterns to see if that made sense.

Jennifer Sharkey said that she has received a few requests to widen roadways so walkers and bikers can utilize the roadways safely.

Emmett Heller, Highway Superintendent, submitted license plate paperwork on the new Distributor Truck.

Mr. Heller reported that paving was completed on 800 E, Buck Lake Road, 250 N, 100 N and 20 N. He said that Metz Road paving will start on Saturday, July 20.

Emmett Heller requested permission to rent a 24’ chipper box in the amount of $15,000.00 from Klink Trucking. Mr. Heller said since they have the new distributor, they would like to go to full width instead of having the seam in the middle. James Crowl made a motion to allow Emmett Heller to rent the chipper box from Klink Trucking. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes. Mr. Heller informed Erin Schiffli that it would have to be insured for approximately $250,000.00.

Mr. Heller said that the Sheriff’s Department has a light that needs replaced and they have asked to use the boom truck so they could reach it. Lynne Liechty made a motion to allow the Highway Department to bring the boom truck to the Sheriff’s Department to help change the light. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Ronald Smith said there was a question on truck paperwork. Erin Schiffli asked if the title paperwork for the two (2) tandem axle dump truck that were approved at the last meeting was signed. Emmett Heller said Ronald Smith signed the paperwork at the last meeting. Ms. Schiffli said the Dealership is asking for the paperwork. Mr. Heller said the dealership requested to have the paperwork overnighted and he was trying to save $30.00 by putting everything in one package.

Frank Charlton, County Park Superintendent, reported the Fairgrounds are ready for the Fair this week. He is checking to see if they can get the handicapped spots striped before the Fair.

Ms. Harris informed the Commissioners that she reached out to the Reservation Software Company to find out options for backing up the information. She said it would cost $300.00 per month for the backup and it would also allow for the software to be on three (3) computers. Lynne Liechty asked if IT could do something in house. Ms. Harris said James Schlup checked and they are not able to do anything with it. Kylee Harris said she has lost the data twice because of computer crashes and a power surge. Ms. Harris said the program is online and is its own thing so IT cannot get into it. Frank Charlton said losing everything required Ms. Harris to re-enter all the data into the system. Lynne Liechty made a motion to sign up for the backup and pay for it from the Event Center Budget. James Crowl 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 $498,341.87. 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 July 1, 2019. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

The Commissioners signed the minutes from the June 17, 2019, meeting that was approved at the last Commissioners’ Meeting.
Rae Delaney, Payroll, submitted the July 5, 2019 payroll in the amount of $396,990.23 for approval. James Crowl made a motion to approve the July 5, 2019 payroll. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Patrick Kirkpatrick, EMS Director, submitted June Closeouts in the amount of $586.60 and June Writeoffs in the amount of $593.19 for approval. Lynne Liechty made a motion to approve the June Closeouts and Writeoffs. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Isaac Lee came to the last Commissioners’ Meeting regarding funding for a Housing Study. Ronald Smith asked what the Commissioners would like to do with the funding request and that the study doesn’t happen without the money, but on the other hand, the money is an issue. Lynne Liechty said the implementation is one thing she has questioned. She said the City of Angola has been on board with it; however, she hasn’t seen any plans of what is being considered. Commissioner Liechty said right now it is a strategic plan and she believes it has value, but as they move forward there will be more costs. She said the EDC is looking at being able to aid builders, building location and assistance with funding. Ronald Smith said at the last meeting it was stated if no money was available for 2019, the Commissioners would have to wait another year and attempt to budget for it.

Bill Schmidt said when Isaac Lee was addressing the Commissioners, he was talking about Steuben County’s Comprehensive Plan; however, in Steuben County, the Comprehensive Plan is more of a theoretical idea and is not necessarily meant to be enforced. Mr. Schmidt said the guts lie in the Zoning Ordinances and to try to use the Comprehensive Plan as a guide to developing this County could lead to some very difficult situations. He said that isn’t to say that the Comprehensive Plan couldn’t be stiffened and enforced because in some County’s the Comprehensive Plan is more important than the Zoning Ordinances. James Crowl agreed with Bill Schmidt. Lynne Liechty said she believes their intent is to look at what is in the County and implementing a strategic plan with the resources Steuben County currently has.

Mike Marturello said he wondered why this discussion has not recognized what is going on in the northeast side of Angola and said to take a step back to remember the 1990’s when they were talking about putting in the Harcourt Bridge, how it would open up all that land to development and look what has happened.

Lynne Liechty said she is not against the Strategic Plan, but with the current budget for 2019 she believes the funding needs to be considered for the 2020 budget. James Crowl said the BZA and Planning Commission work very hard to make sure things are done right within the County; however, then you have Ashley, Clear Lake, Fremont, Hamilton, Hudson, Orland and Angola whom have their own set of rules. Then all of a sudden Steuben County is asked to spend three (3) times more money than the City of Angola and Orland is only asked for $730.00. Steuben County just doesn’t have the money in the budget and he believes it is a budgetary item for 2020.

Lynne Liechty made a motion to place the Strategic Plan Funding Request into the Commissioners’ 2020 Budget Request for consideration by County Council. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Ambulance Billings Services submitted proposed write-offs in the amount of $6,226.10 for eight (8) patients that are deceased and estates or assets cannot be located. James Crowl made a motion to approve the write-offs in the amount of $6,226.10. Lynne Liechty seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.

Lynne Liechty stated that Tami Sunney recommended hiring Schneider on Contract instead of having a full time GIS Coordinator which could be more cost effective. Commissioner Liechty recommended having Tami Sunney and Schneider come in and discuss the option.

Kim Meyers, Auditor, stated that the Commissioners need to officially announce the termination of the GIS Coordinator. James Crowl stated that the GIS Coordinator was terminated and recommended waiting to see what happens between now and the next meeting. Lynne Liechty made a motion to make the termination of the GIS Coordinator official and place it on the record. James Crowl seconded that motion and the motion carried with three (3) ayes.
Rodney Robinson, Sheriff, informed the Commissioners that the air conditioning in the Steuben County Jail has failed and they are now cooling the building by using eight (8) temporary units until the repairs are made. He said currently work is being done on one (1) of the units and they believe they will be able to get it up and running by this afternoon. They will then start working on the second unit. Sheriff Robinson stated that they have never had an HVAC Maintenance Agreement; however, that may be something to look into.

The Commissioners received the following correspondence: Janel Meyer, SCSWCD re: Board Meeting Minutes; John Sampson NEIndiana re: Northeast Regional Forum; Eric Grossman – Tippecanoe re: Meeting on Proposed DLGF 501AC Rule & Guideline Changes, BoAC re: Memorandum June 11, 2019; Janel Meyer, SCSWCD re: Board Meeting Agenda; Eric Grossman – Tippecanoe re: Proposed Legislative Changes; Stacey Meek, NICC re: Next Advisory Board Meeting; Stephanie Yager re: 2019/2020 IACC Legislative Policy Request Form; BoAC re: Memorandum July 9, 2019.

STEUBEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

_____________________________________________
Ronald L. Smith, President, South District

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James A. Crowl, Vice President, Middle District

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Lynne Liechty, North District

Attest:  __________________________________
Kim Meyers, Steuben County Auditor