

JENNINGS COUNTY COMMISSIONER MEETING

February 5, 2026, 6:00 pm

Annex Building

Matt Sporleder, Shane Boswell, Alex Zimmerman, and Charlie St. John were present. Matt opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

HR presents a travel request from Area Plan for a December 2025 training meeting. All costs will come from the APC training and education budget. Shane made a motion to approve the request, Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously. A second travel request from EMS is presented. This request is to travel to Iowa and perform the final inspection on the new ambulance. Hoosier Fire and Equipment will pay for the flight, lodging, and meals for this trip. Shane made a motion to approve, Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

The Assessor has asked HR to come before the commissioners and ask to fill his open position, deputy assessor. Shane made a motion to approve the request, Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously. The person that has left the Assessors' office has taken a position in the Sheriff's Department and is asking for all her time to be carried over to the new department. Shane made a motion to approve the request, Charlie seconded the request, passed unanimously.

HR has received a resume for a highway superintendent. The commissioners would like the job to be posted internally first and then set up interviews with qualified candidates. If one individual stands out, then the next step would be to go to council and ask for that position to be put back into the budget. Matt asked Nicci to go to council and ask if they will get additional appropriations for the position. If the council agrees to the additional appropriations, then HR can proceed with posting the position. Alex suggests going ahead and posting the position. Shane made a motion to post the position and to ask council for funding. Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously. HR presents the February comp time balances to the commissioners. Two departments did not submit comp hours. Nicci says that comp time is up by 377.26 hours, however most of this is from the recent snow event. Matt asks why two departments did not submit any hours and that she needs to reach out and tell these two departments that they must turn in the comp hours.

Ron Higgins and Dan Brookbank discuss Senate Bill 433 with the commissioners. The purpose of this policy is to establish comprehensive and mandatory standards for the accreditation of service officers. The State of Indiana has established a comprehensive requirement for the Veteran Service Officers (VSO) in the claims management system. The VSO must complete relevant information on all forms, intake logs, and claimant information. Only accredited service officers will be allowed unrestricted access to the claims management system.

The high points of this bill are as follows

1. VSOs are now required to be an employee of the county.
2. No longer appointed four years.
3. Office hours must be maintained at least 1,000 hours a year (20 hours per week).
4. Shall have dedicated office space to privately interact with individuals.
5. Stable and reliable internet connections, computer with adequate storage that can operate CMS.

6. Signature pad capable of capturing and transmitting signatures into electronic format.
 7. VSOs shall attend training courses on an annual basis and pass the requisite proficiency exams.
- Ron says that Dan Brookbank is 100% in compliance with this law before this bill was written. The commissioners thanked Dan for everything he does for our veterans.

The Auditor is asking for an increase in the county credit card limit. The limit is currently set at \$25,000.00 and the auditor is asking for \$30,000.00. EMS is asking for an increase of \$500.00, the Health Department is asking for a county credit card with a \$1000.00 limit, and Travis Shepherd is asking for a county card with a \$1500.00 limit. Shane made a motion to approve the increase to \$30,000.00. Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

Shane made a motion to sign the disaster emergency declaration, Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

Shane made a motion for the approval of payroll and claims. Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

Shane made a motion to approve prior meeting minutes. Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

Alex comments on the rumors on social media concerning the commissioners purchasing properties at tax sales. Alex explains what happens if a property is on sale and no one bids, the property is not sold, but the certificate of sale by operation of the law is put in the name of the commissioners. The board itself did not bid on these properties. In full disclosure, the commissioners are petitioning the court to take title of the Butlerville Schools property which had a total of around \$130,000 of delinquent taxes and other fees. The commissioners filed the petition about a week ago. The commissioners will take title to that in the hopes of marketing it and selling it to a buyer that will develop the property and get that property back on the tax role.

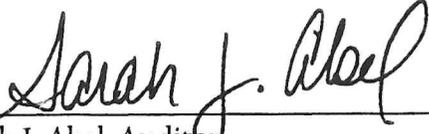
Matt also wants to discuss the comment "They thought there was a hot mic when someone said, leave those properties off, don't put them in the paper." That statement was made not so that someone could steal property; It was made because the question was asked to the treasurer, how many properties have been on the tax sale multiple times and never had a bid? There is an advertising fee every time these properties go to the newspaper. SRI also charges a fee whether it is sold or not. The good common sense for commissioners is to stop wasting the money advertising it.

The Auditor made the commissioners aware that a You Tube streaming key changed and this was the reason our meetings were not live streaming. There was no connectivity to You Tube from the equipment in the conference room because of this.

Alex says that the law states that you do not have to stop a meeting because of technical issues. Any action taken in the meeting is still valid.

Matt said that he was very, very happy with our snow removal compared to other counties!

Shane made the motion adjourn at 6:38 p.m., Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously.



Sarah J. Abel, Auditor



Charlie St. John



Matt Sporleder, President



Shane Boswell

