

PERRY COUNTY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
July 24, 2025

The Perry County Council met on the above date at 5:00 p.m. as was duly advertised. Council members in attendance were Kelli Harding (Kelli), David Etienne (DE), Stan Goffinet (SG), Paul Brockman (PB), Gale Garner (GG), Cory Filley (CF) and Brad Harth (BH). Auditor First Deputy Kelli Wilgus was also present. There was no *Sheriff, Attorney or News Representative* present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA

DE made the motion to accept with addition, seconded by GG. Motion carried 7-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

a) Jim Carter, Animal Welfare Ordinance Discussion

Carter stated there is a new Animal Ordinance that has basically been preapproved by the Commissioners, to be finalized on August 4th. The new Ordinance changes the number of members that are on the board. Previously there were five members, and now there will be seven, and the County Council will be responsible for the appointment of two members. Carter stated that the board needs to be filled as soon as possible. There are currently five members, and a sixth member that will be appointed by the Troy Town Council.

Carter asked the Council if they know of anyone who is interest in any kind of animal issues, please consider that person.

Carter stated that the discussion at the Animal Control Board meeting was over two items, one is the lack of an Animal Control Officer and the other is major cat problems.

Carter is wanting a new restricted fund set up to take care of the cat problem. The Animal Control Board will have to agree with doing this.

TRACY SCHROEDER, RECORDER

a) Sworn Statement

Schroeder appeared with her sworn statement which says the Recorder has enough funds in the Recorder's Perpetuation Fund to pay for office supplies, which includes paper, toner, travel expenses, Recorder Association dues, service charges, and different things, in the same amount of \$5,025 as it was last year. Schroeder is asking the Council's approval for her sworn statement to be taken out of the Recorder's Perpetuation Fund.

CF made a motion to accept the statement, seconded by BH. Motion carried 7-0.

b) Part-time back indexing project

Schroeder stated that with this project, she is asking that she can keep and hire back indexers to continue this project. This is paid for out of the Recorder's Perpetuation Fund. Kelli asked that Schroeder currently has one person, and one moved to another position, and Schroeder responded yes. There is an opening in the back indexing position.

DE made a motion to allow the hiring of the part-time person for indexing out of the Recorder's Perpetuation Fund, seconded by GG. Motion carried 7-0.

BH wanted to make it clear that the Recorder's Perpetuation fund is something the Council does not control, it is strictly within the Recorder's domain, and this does not represent an increase in that portion of what she does at the Recorder's office. The difference between Perpetuation Fund and the Recorder's Fund is what BH is in favor of.

MINUTES

a) 06.26.2025

CF made a motion to approve, seconded by PB. Motion carried 7-0.

b) 07.16.2025 Special Meeting

CF made a motion to approve, seconded by BH. Motion carried 6-0-1 (Kelli abstained).

KRISTINIA HAMMACK, AUDITOR

a) Abatements

Kelli stated she had some questions about some abatement, and since the CF1s were sent late, she would like to table until the next meeting.

Kelli stated she had asked last year, and never really received an answer, but on page two of the CF1 form, at the top it has instructions. It states that within 45 days after receipt of this form, the designated body may determine whether or not the property owner has substantially complied with statement of benefits. Kelli's question is related to some of the CF1s have dates that are in March and April, so the County is not within the stated 45 days. Kelli asked how do you interpret that? Should the Council be getting these as they come in instead of getting them all at once, one time a year? Is the Council okay to approve those outside of 45 days? Council Attorney Rod Acchiardo responded that these forms should be provided to the Council and reviewed within 45 days.

Kelli stated she would like more time to review the abatements, as the Statement of Benefits were provided, but not the CF1s until the day of the meeting.

SG made a motion to table, seconded by BH. Motion carried 7-0.

b) Transfer Request

- Appropriation Transfer – General; Parks and Rec

FROM: 1000.11801.00000.0803 Maintenance Assistant \$4,704.00

TO: 1000.36200.00000.0803 Equipment Repair \$4,704.00

Greg Hendershot stated he had a major repair for the work truck, being the power steering went out, plus some additional work that needed to be done.

DE made a motion to approve, seconded by SG. Motion carried 7-0.

- Appropriation Transfer – HFI Grant

FROM: 1161.11701.00000.9610 Sanitarian Assistant \$5,475.00

TO: 1161.21100.00000.9610 XRF Gun \$5,475.00

Health Nurse Supervisor Tara Lucas stated that the XRF Gun is a hand-held device that is used to scan surfaces and probe soil, and provides the lead results. If there is a child who has a high lead level, the Sanitarian would accompany Lucas, as required, to go into the home to educate and try to find the source of the lead. The Sanitarian was recently certified to operate this equipment, so in conjunction with Lucas, they can work together to get the full picture as to where that lead poisoning would be coming from.

Lucas stated this equipment is a requirement for Health First Indiana dollars to have someone, either on your staff that is certified to do this and have the equipment to do it, or to partner with neighboring or any county that has someone certified. With the second option, the prices were astronomical. It is much more cost effective to send the Sanitarian to training and purchase the equipment.

With the funding cuts to HFI in 2026, the County was not able to fill that Assistant Sanitarian position, and that is why the request for transfer is from the Sanitarian Assistant, which has a surplus.

The XRF Gun costs over \$30,000. Kelli asked if Lucas knows what is the life expectancy of this gun? Lucas stated that once the gun is purchased, she believes there are data software updates.

PB made a motion to approve, seconded by SG. Motion carried 7-0.

c) Additional Appropriation Request:

- Pre-Trial--Prosecutor; Law Enforcement Donation

#2502.39104.00000.0009 \$ 3,500.00

Prosecutor Samatha Hurst stated that they have this money currently in their Pre-Trial Diversion fund. It has just not been appropriated to a line item.

Hurst stated that she was asked by the State Police, the Southern SWAT District, if a new drone could help be funded. This drone is flown over residences when they are called out to situations where there is a barricaded subject. Their current drone has gone down, and they are in need of a new one.

Hurst stated that while making the transfer, a little extra is being transferred in case something else comes up when law enforcement asks for some kind of donation. If this money is not used, it goes back into their budget.

GG made a motion to approve, seconded by DE. Motion carried 7-0.

- Pre-Trial—Prosecutor; Law Travel

#2502.32200.00000.0009 \$ 2,500.00

Hurst stated that when she did the budget in 2024 for 2025, there were three prosecutors in her office. There are now four prosecutors, as the State is paying for another prosecutor due to the population at Branchville exceeding 1,500 inmates. By statute, the County was given another prosecutor. With all

the training requirements that the prosecutors have to meet every year, Hurst is not sure if all of this amount will be used, but would like to have it moved now as most of the training is done towards the end of the year.

CF made a motion to approve, seconded by SG. Motion carried 7-0.

- IV-E Public Defender—Circuit Court; Attorney
#8960.31104.00000.0232 \$ 312.23
First Deputy Wilgus stated the Court gets reimbursed for Pauper Attorney by the State. This money is receipted into this account, but in order to spend it, it has to be appropriated for that line to be spent for Pauper Attorney. It is not asking the County for additional money.

PB made a motion to approve, seconded by BH. Motion carried 7-0.

- IV-D Public Defender—Circuit Court; Attorney
#8961.31104.00000.0232 \$ 26,494.93
This is the same as above.

BH made a motion to approve, seconded by SG. Motion carried 7-0.

COUNTY COUNCIL

a) County Clerk, Joan Hess – MicroVote Machine Upgrade Presentation

Hess appeared with Steve Shamo, who is with MicroVote. They supply the County's voting machines.

Shamo stated that the current County voting system have voting panels, originally revolved by help with the American Vote Act money in 2004 or 2005. Recently the State, through a Federal grant, added the paper trail device and the new booth. However, they did not replace the internal voting panel itself in the booth. That panel, by the next Presidential election, will have nearly thirty-year-old electronics in that device.

In 2019, MicroVote developed a new panel to start phasing out the old one, and started using higher security protocols within the panel. The screen was enhanced with a color screen.

Shamo likes to give a two- or three-year advance on changes coming, as in this situation, to replace all 55 panels would cost approximately \$156,000.

Shamo's goal and MicroVote's goal is to have all the counties on the new panel for the Presidential election in 2028. Shamo stated there is nothing wrong with the current machines, and they will continue to work past that point, however, MicroVote is repairing with either used parts or parts that have been shelved for several years. The thirty-year election device is approaching its end of life.

Shamo stated that there are 52 counties in the state that utilize the MicroVote system, and with approximately 30% have switched over to the new device. Another 30 to 40% will convert over the next year and a half. The ultimate goal is to have everyone converted over by 2028. In an attempt to try to absorb the cost, as it does come up every 20 years or so, what they have been doing as a company is in that first initial purchase and delivery of the system, if the County is able to establish 60% of the overall cost of the system, then his company can extend the balance out over the second and third year, if necessary, with no interest.

Shamo stated that the County currently has four of these new devices, which were purchased with additional funds left over a year and one-half ago. The County now has two different devices. When you start phasing into a countywide implementation, the County would want to be on one basic platform for training purposes. As of now, the equipment is fine.

Kelli asked if MicroVote was going to make the current machines obsolete, and Shamo responded that he believed that obsolescence will come with a federal certification process, if they would mandate a higher security protocol.

Kelli asked if there is a grant that becomes available for this purchase, that the County would be made aware of it by MicroVote, and Shamo responded that if a grant is available, he believes the Secretary of State will show up waving flags. Currently there are no grants for this.

b) Commissioners – Request to apply for a Solid Waste Grant

Kelli stated that Commissioner Cole requested to apply for a Solid Waste grant. This is the Indiana Community Recycling Grant Program. This grant is a 75/25 match. It is for modified trailers, and the cost is approximately \$5,000 each. If approved, they are asking for six trailers, which would be \$30,000. The match would be from the APR Solid Waste funds that they have.

GG made a motion to approve, seconded by SG. Motion carried 7-0.

c) 2026 Council Budget Request Discussion

Kelli sent out to the Council the form that was sent to her, with the Auditor asking if there are any changes, with Kelli stating she did not see any changes. She is asking if everyone is in agreement with this.

PB made a motion to leave the budget the same as 2025, seconded by BH. Motion carried 7-0.

d) Letter of Support for Derby Community Association

Kelli stated she received a call from Barry Stiles, with the Derby Community Association, asking if the Council would be willing to provide a Letter of Support for a grant they are pursuing from the T-Mobile Hometown program. They are seeking \$50,000 in funding to purchase new composite playground equipment for Mulzer's Park on the Derby riverfront.

This Letter of Support strengthens their application and demonstrates that the Council is supportive of their efforts. Kelli drafted a letter and sent to the Council for review.

DE made a motion to approve the Letter of Support, seconded by GG. Motion carried 7-0.

e) The next meeting is Thursday, August 28, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m. CST.

SG made a motion to adjourn, seconded by PB. Motion carried 7-0.

Minutes approved this 28th day of August, 2025.

President, Perry County Council

Minutes reviewed by:

Kristinia L. Hammack, Perry County Auditor

Minutes prepared by:

Leisa M. Ecker, Deputy Auditor