

PERRY COUNTY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
October 23, 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), Brad Harth (BH) and Paul Brckman (PB). Deputy Auditor Leisa Ecker, Attorney Rod Acchiardo, and a *News Representative* were also present. There was no *Sheriff* present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Kelli stated that the meeting will begin with Jonathan Blake, RJI Solutions, who will speak regarding the real and personal property tax abatement for Webb Wheel. Blake stated that this is a proposed 200,000 square foot expansion of the of the current Webb Wheel facility here in Perry County. It will include approximately \$15 million of real property investment, and another \$42 million of personal property investment. This will add approximately 28 jobs over the next three years with salaries approximately \$1.5 million.

Blake stated that he was joined at this meeting with Chris Hemans, from Seviles who is the site selector, as well as Amy Coyle from Webb Wheel at the Tell City Plant. Blake stated that at the County Council meeting the prior month, two Resolutions were introduced, R-CC-25-3, which considered real property tax abatements. In addition, Resolution R-CC-25-2, which considered the introduction of personal property tax abatements.

Kelli stated that that the first order of business is to conduct the Public Hearings related to the two applications filed by Webb Wheel Products Inc. for real and personal property tax abatements for the proposed expansion of their Tell City plant. Pursuant to Indiana law, the Council will hold a Public Hearing on each request separately, one for the real property and one for the personal property tax abatement. Any member of the public may present testimony in support or opposition of the requested tax abatements during the public hearing for each request.

Before opening the Public Hearings, Kelli asked Jonathan Blake, Economic Development Director for Perry County, to present each request for consideration by the Council. Following the presentation of each request, the Council will open the Public Hearing and receive comments from each person wishing to be heard. To maintain orderly procedure, public comments will be limited to not more than three minutes a piece.

Blake stated the first Resolution was R-CC-25-5. This is a Resolution confirming final action on the real property tax abatements. Pursuant to Indiana law, the Council has properly published notice in the Perry County News on October 5, 2025, announcing the date, time, and location of the Public Hearing related to the Council's consideration of real property tax abatements for this project. Also, as required by law, the Auditor has provided copies of the introductory, or declaratory Resolution to all taxing units affected by the potential tax abatements.

Blake stated that based on the information provided by the applicant, and the current tax rate for Perry County Troy Township, the estimate that the applicant will realize an approximately net savings \$1.296 million over the abatement period, with a total estimated property taxes to be paid over that same period being \$1.322 million. This is just for the real property.

RJI is recommending a 10-year tax abatement, which would be a ten-year phase in schedule, as is attached Exhibit C on the Resolution.

DE asked if the scheduled completion date is December 31, 2027? Coyle responded yes, this is a step in the approval process. Webb Wheel has to go through their corporate office to get approval, but ideally that would be the completion date. DE asked if the tax abatement would begin with taxable year 2028, payable in 2029, and Coyle confirmed this.

SG asked how many employees Webb Wheel expected to move from Ferdinand to Tell City, and Coyle responded that they have a total workforce of 92 right now that they would start with, and would add an additional 28. DE added that the 92 includes Ferdinand and Tell City.

Kelli asked that with the 200,000 square foot addition, will that be 100% utilized, or is there some room for growth within it? Coyle responded that it has potential for expanding business in it, but it will be mostly utilized once complete.

BH asked if the expansion will encompass all of the real estate that Webb Wheel owns? Coyle responded she believed they own approximately 50 acres. Webb Wheel is not utilizing all of the land that they own. She was not sure what the blueprint of the building was acreage wise. Hemans stated that the 200,000 square foot building will take up a lot of the land that is behind the current buildings that is currently cleared. He does not believe it goes all the way out to the property line.

Blake stated that assuming there are no other questions from the Council, it would be appropriate for the Council to open and conduct the public hearing related to Resolution R-CC-25-5.

The Public Hearing was opened on Resolution R-CC-25-5. Any member of the public who wished to speak in support of or in opposition of this request was invited to come to the podium.

There were no comments.

The Public Hearing was closed and any final comments or questions could be asked by the Council.

There were no comments or questions.

DE made a motion to approve Resolution R-CC-25-5, seconded by SG. Motion carried 5-0.

Kelli stated that Resolution R-CC-25-4 is a Resolution setting forth final action and determining the qualifications for the economic revitalization area have been met in confirming Resolution R-CC-25-2 regarding personal property tax abatement for Webb Wheel Products, Inc.

Blake stated that similar to the previous Resolution, however, this is for the personal property. Webb Wheel is proposing a potential investment of approximately \$42 million in personal property investment. Pursuant to the law, the Council published notice on October 5, 2025, in the Perry County News, announcing the date, time, and location of the Public Hearing. In addition, as required by law, the Auditor's office filed the required information with all affected taxing units.

Blake stated that based on the information supplied by the applicant, RJL estimated that the applicant will realize a net savings of approximately \$1.414 million over the abatement period.

In regards to the abatement schedule discussed at the prior meeting, RJL had estimated a higher abatement amount for revenue. The difference between then and now was the depreciation schedule that was applied to that personal property. That has been applied based on the pool two depreciation schedule. RJL estimated that the property taxes to be paid over that time period would be in the neighborhood of \$1.173 million. Blake added that all this depended on the investment actually occurring and the project moving forward. As assessments occur over the years, trending up or down, it will impact the numbers.

RJL is recommending a ten-year phased in approach as in Exhibit C of the Resolution.

BH asked with the equipment that will be purchased, is there a rough estimate of its lifespan? Coyle responded that typically for the equipment, it is between eight to twelve years. BH asked if it is regularly replaced on a schedule, and Coyle responded that it depended on the wear.

Blake stated that assuming there are no other questions from the Council, it would be appropriate for the Council to open and conduct the public hearing related to Resolution R-CC-25-4.

The Public Hearing was opened on Resolution R-CC-25-4. Any member of the public who wished to speak in support of or in opposition of this request was invited to come to the podium.

There were no comments.

The Public Hearing was closed and any final comments or questions could be asked by the Council.

SG made a comment.

PB made a motion to approve Resolution R-CC-25-4, seconded by BH. Motion carried 5-0.

AGENDA

DE made the motion to accept as amended, seconded by PB. Motion carried 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- a) None

STEVE HAUSER, EMA DIRECTOR

- a) Emergency Management Performance (EMP) Grant

Kelli stated Hauser is wanting to apply for this grant. This grant is applied for each year. The State reimburses the County for one-half of the EMA Director's salary, and one-half of the EMA Administrative Assistant's salary. The approved 2025 budget award maximum is \$32,827.63, and the deadline to submit the application is October 30, 2025.

SG made a motion to apply for the EMP Grant, seconded by DE. Motion carried 5-0.

- b) Hazard Material Emergency Plan (HMEP) Grant

This grant is funded through the Department of Transportation. Hauser would use these funds to replace the copier in the EMA office. His current copier is approximately eight years old. Hoosier Business Machines advised him that they no longer support the current copier under the service contract.

This grant is in the amount of \$8,000. There is no match of local funds, and the deadline to submit the application is October 30, 2025.

BH made a motion to apply for the HMEP grant, seconded by PB. Motion carried 5-0.

MINUTES

- a) 08.28.2025

SG made a motion to approve with changes, seconded by DE. Motion carried 5-0.

- b) 09.03.2025

BH made a motion to approve, seconded by SG. Motion carried 5-0.

- c) 09.04.2025

DE made a motion to approve with changes, seconded by SG. Motion carried 5-0.

- d) 09.10.2025

DE made a motion to approve, seconded by PB. Motion carried 5-0.

- e) 09.11.2025

SG made a motion to approve, seconded by DE. Motion carried 5-0.

- f) 09.25.2025

BH made a motion to approve, seconded by DE. Motion carried 5-0.

- g) 10.09.2025

PB made a motion to approve, seconded by SG. Motion carried 5-0.

- h) 10.15.2025

DE made a motion to approve with changes, seconded by SG. Motion carried 5-0.

KRISTINIA HAMMACK, AUDITOR

- a) Additional Appropriation:

- Capital Projects Fund—Commissioners; Bituminous
#4800.23300.00000.0068 \$2,900.00

Ecker stated that this is to cover the additional expense to patch for the Courthouse paving project.

BH made a motion to approve, seconded by PB. Motion carried 5-0.

- General Fund—Council; Examination of Records (County)
#1000.51112.00000.0061 \$28,449.44

Ecker stated this is for the 2024 State Board of Accounts audit.

SG made a motion to approve, seconded by DE. Motion carried 5-0.

- Pauper Public Defender Fund—Circuit Court; Attorney
#8961.31104.00000.0232 \$36,273.01

This was to appropriate the reimbursement for the Pauper Attorney.

BH made a motion to approve, seconded by SG. Motion carried 5-0.

- IV-E Public Defender Fund—Circuit Court; Attorney
#8960.31104.00000.0232 \$597.97

This was to make the appropriation for the reimbursement received from the State.

PB made a motion to approve, seconded by BH. Motion carried 5-0.

b) Transfer Request:

- Appropriation Transfer—Clerk; Records Perpetuation Fund
FROM: 1119.44701.00000.0001 Furniture & Fixtures \$ 200.00
TO: 1119.32200.00000.0001 Travel \$ 200.00
This was to pay milage for a Deputy Clerk's attendance at a Child Support training.

DE made a motion to approve, seconded by SG. Motion carried 5-0.

- Appropriation Transfer – Parks & Rec; General Fund
From: 1000.44500.00000.0803 Equipment \$ 100.00
From: 1000.31502.00000.0803 Ground Keeping \$ 300.00
From: 1000.36105.00000.0803 Park Maintenance
& Repair \$ 100.00
From: 1000.21300.00000.0803 Shop Supplies \$ 100.00
TO: 1000.35101.00000.0803 Utilities \$ 600.00

BH made a motion to approve, seconded by SG. Motion carried 5-0.

COUNTY COUNCIL

a) Jonathan Blake, RJL Solutions

Blake stated that the Council has RJL's monthly report, and pointed some highlights from it.

1. As part of their research and stakeholder engagement work, they have completed their economic analysis including demographics, infrastructure, and industry clusters. This data will be utilized to help attract new businesses to the area.
2. RJL is working on a stakeholder survey, which is currently in the developmental phase. This survey will help RJL understand the priorities or concerns, and initiatives that the community as a whole want the County to focus on. RJL looks to have this completed in the next month or so.
3. Blake addressed some comments that were made at the October 6, 2025 Tell City Council meeting, regarding a perceived lack of communication from RJL's team with the mayor. Blake wanted to be clear that RJL has been attempting to meet with the mayor since April 24th of this year. Blake stated that some of the comments in that meeting were not completely factual. Blake further stated that RJL will continue to work on meeting with him.
4. Blake stated that on October 6th, he and an associate toured the Waupaca Foundry. It was impressive to see all the products that they make there.
5. Regarding marketing and branding, it was discovered that the Perry County brand identity is owned by another organization. It can create confusion when RJL is working to attract businesses, or work with existing businesses in the community. At the October 6th Commissioner meeting, RJL made a recommendation that they move forward with a new brand refresh.

SG stated that he feels it is concerning that the Mayor of Tell City is not meeting with RJL. Many appointments have been set up with him, and he has cancelled at the last minute. SG added that Tell City, Cannelton, and Troy needs to work with the County government. Blake responded that RJL will continue to engage and make sure that they are reaching out.

b) Solid Waste - Part-time Vacancy

Kelli stated that John Roach sent an email to First Deputy Auditor Kelli Wilgus regarding a part-time position that is vacant. He is looking to replace the part-time attendant who resigned, with the hours and pay remaining the same. In his email, Roach stated this is necessary and if it would not be approved, it would hinder the hours of the location.

SG asked if this has been approached by the Commissioners, or have they said anything regarding this? DE stated that this is a Council matter.

Kelli read aloud the email from John Roach.

SG stated that with the County's tremendous cuts this year, and with next year possibly being worse, the Council has to really look at adding or scrutinizing employees if they are needed. SG added that maybe the County could eliminate through attrition, and Council may need to be looking at that. Kelli stated she had been saying the same thing for a couple of years, and the Council needed to look at this every time one of these come up, as it is the responsible thing to do.

BH stated that in the email, it stated that if this position was not filled, they might have to cut operation hours. The Council has asked other departments to tighten it up and not replace people. BH would have liked to have heard Solid Waste's discussion about whether or not they could not continue without this person. Kelli stated that the Council could table this, and ask Roach to come to the next meeting to speak on this. The Council could have a special meeting if Roach did not want to wait a full month. SG agreed that Roach should come to a meeting and address the Council.

BH made a motion to table until the November 20, 2025 meeting, seconded by SG.

Motion carried 5-0.

- c) BH stated that at a prior meeting, Assessor Mendy Lassaline presented the Council with an additional appropriation request that was tabled. BH thought Lassaline expected that it would be brought up at the next Council meeting, when in fact the proper procedure would have been for Lassaline to have gotten back on the agenda. Lassaline spoke to someone at the State, who confirmed that essentially that is the proper way to do it unless it is tabled to a specific date. BH wanted to make other departments aware that if a request would be tabled, and not tabled with a specific date to be reintroduced, it would have to be readvertised and put on the agenda again.
- d) The next Regular meeting is Thursday, November 20, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. at the Courthouse Meeting Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:42 p.m. CST.

SG made a motion to adjourn, seconded by PB. Motion carried 5-0.

Minutes approved this 20th day of November, 2025.

President, Perry County Council

Minutes reviewed by:

Kristinia L. Hammack, Perry County Auditor

Minutes prepared by:

Leisa M. Ecker, Deputy Auditor