

PERRY COUNTY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
November 20, 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), Gale Garner (GG), Brad Harth (BH) and Paul Brockman (PB). Auditor Kristinia Hammack 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 as amended, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- a) Randy Cole, Commissioner

Cole stated that the Commissioners are asking permission to replace the EMA Director and the EMA Administrative Assistant. These positions have been advertised, which are both full-time.

Kelli stated that she believed the County gets reimbursed for a portion of the salary, and Auditor Hammack confirmed this.

BH made a motion to advertise and replace the position of the EMA Director and the Administrative Assistant, seconded by PB. Motion carried 6-0.

GREG HENDERSHOT AND JAKE AUSTIN, PARKS & REC

- a) Request to fill vacancy-Parks Assistant

Austin stated that Hendershot will be retiring at the end of the year, and he will be stepping into the director role. This will leave a vacancy for the Parks/Maintenance Assistant position. He requested that this be advertised and filled.

Kelli stated she watched the Parks and Rec meeting, and she was somewhat confused as there were different discussions going on. One of the board members stated she was going to ask the Council and Commissioners about a stipulation with the hiring. This was something regarding removing maintenance duties. Kelli stated she was asked, and told this board member that the job description that the County has includes maintenance duties. The description includes several maintenance duties. This board member stated she was okay with the position if she could ask the Council/Commissioners to remove this, or look at removing this. Hendershot responded that maintenance keeps them really busy, and perhaps that board member was trying to lighten the load. Kelli believed it was a stipulation, and believed Warren Taylor even repeated it. Taylor responded that he brought up at the meeting that whenever Hendershot took over the duties for maintenance, it was combined with Parks and Rec to try to save some money for the County. Hendershot would do both jobs.

BH asked Austin if the maintenance responsibilities are what he is expecting? Austin responded that was his original plan. BH stated that in the Council's eyes, the position includes the maintenance responsibilities. Kelli added that the Council is not looking to separate duties and then pay someone else for maintenance.

Hendershot stated that they are asking early to fill the position of the assistant due to Hendershot being here until the end of the month. This will give more time to have the application out there.

BH made a motion to advertise the position, seconded by DE. Motion carried 6-0.

JOHN ROACH, SOLID WASTE DIRECTOR

- a) Request to fill vacancy

Kelli stated that the Council received an email from Roach asking to replace the part-time attendant who resigned. The hours and pay would remain the same at 29 hours per week. Kelli asked Roach that he has been without this position for approximately a month, and Roach confirmed that.

BH stated that at the prior meeting, he brought up that the County is trying any way possible to save money, as the County was not able to give raises. BH asked that with the person short for a month, was the department pretty ragged? Roach

confirmed this. BH stated that the issue has essentially been addressed that he had concerns about, with the County trying to tighten down as much as possible. GG made a motion to fill the vacancy, seconded by PB. Motion carried 6-0.

DAVID FAULKENBURG, SHERIFF

a) Resignation

Faulkenburg stated he received a resignation that evening of another officer. This makes five that have left in the last approximately 40 days. In total experience, that is a loss of approximately 31 ½ years of experience.

b) Classification System for Deputies

Faulkenburg stated that with looking at a way to entice and keep good employees, adding he knows that money and budget is tight, and in the future what the cost would be. He is looking for a way to compensate deputies for the time and training that they are doing.

Faulkenburg stated that there are new people who come into the job and are learning, and then there are seasoned deputies who have a lot of intelligence regarding the job. These individuals have interaction with people, and everything that goes on in the job. With bringing in a new deputy, it is filling a body space, however, you are not replacing the person that has left. It takes a long time to get back up to where that person who left was. Faulkenburg added he was referring to the new person understanding their job, and that they are trustworthy about making decisions. In law enforcement and criminal justice, it is a lot to do with decision making at the spur of the moment in the field. Also, the knowledge of dealing with the public.

Faulkenburg stated that after discussion, he is wanting to recognize the experience and work that deputies are doing.

With a classification system, there would be:

- Basic Recruit

This position would take three years before the deputy is really starting to get their stride. This would have a base salary for this intro period, which would be lower than what is set now for the basic deputy. The reason behind this is so that a person can show themselves that they have received certain skill sets and motor skill sets, which are required by State Statute. Another skill is physical tactics, which is hands-on with people and how that deputy would treat them. This recruit would have to pass the firearms skill, and attend and pass the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy, and pass the stringent reviews of the Indiana Law Enforcement Training Board.

Faulkenburg and Chief Deputy Eric Dickenson discussed that as this basic recruit. As this person passes those segments, start an increase in pay as they go through these. This way, by the time they are graduating from the academy, they are basically at the base pay.

- First Deputy

- Second Deputy

- Third Deputy

For the three classifications above, they would hold that level of pay for up to three years. At the end of those three years, it would then be rated, for instance, as a third-class officer. The lower the number, the higher amount of time the officer has been on. For a third-class officer, being a range of three to five or six years, there would be another increase in pay. Then the officer would develop into a second-class officer or first-class officer, which is up to almost twelve years of time.

Faulkenburg stated that the person who resigned that evening had fourteen years and would have been making more money.

The question to answer is should an officer who has fourteen years versus an officer who has 367 days be making the same amount? What would be the incentive for staying?

Faulkenburg stated that in addition, he wants to recognize the person who goes above and beyond and gets enthusiastic. If an officer goes through the process of getting his certification in an area and then come back and train others, which would save the department money.

- Master Deputy

This officer would have twenty years and beyond.

Faulkenburg stated the discussion between himself and Dickenson would be to base it on base salary, not on what deputies are currently making, but if they are getting a higher rating. Faulkenburg added this program would cost approximately \$118,300.

STEVE HOWELL, HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

a) Two Operator positions vacancies

Howell has two operator positions to fill. These operators need a CDL as everyone plows snow. An operator gets paid a little more than a truck driver.

PB made a motion to approve, seconded by DE. Motion carried 6-0.

JONATHAN BLAKE, RJL SOLUTIONS

Blake gave a brief update. Both he and his associate Christy had a productive day in the County.

- Christy met with Best Chairs regarding their long-term plans for their operations.
- Met with the Southwest Indiana Regional Council on Aging and the Perry County Council on Aging to understand how the senior populations are being affected by decisions at a State and Federal level, as well how they are operating within the confines of their budgetary constraints.
- Met with Mayor Cail and discussed the potential collaboration with the City and helping support their initiatives as well.
- Blake gave a brief update on Webb Wheel. RJL was expecting to have an update from them earlier that week, as their site selector normally has Friday meetings with Webb Wheel. That meeting was moved to the day of the Council meeting; therefore, Blake had not reconnected with him. The remonstrance period for the tax abatements did expire on November 4th. That was the end of the ten-day period that taxpayers had to file an appeal to the Circuit Court related to those tax abatements.
- In collaboration with the Council, the Commissioners, and Redevelopment, RJL is reviewing several documents related to potential transfer of real estate, or a request for transfer of real estate, for Waupaca. This is for property around their plant. RJL has engaged legal counsel to help and review all of these documents, and to understand what the County's obligations are from a contractual standpoint, and what the next steps should be.

MINUTES

a) 10.23.2025

BH made a motion to approve with change, seconded by DE. Motion carried 6-0.

KRISTINIA HAMMACK, AUDITOR

a) Additional Appropriation:

- General Fund—Assessor; Office Supplies
#1000.21100.00000.0008 \$ 500.00

Hammack stated that this fund was zeroed out to balance the levy funds for budget, with the intention to do an additional after the first of the year. Assessor Mendy Lassaline had already moved some funds to help cover expenses.

BH made a motion to approve, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.

- Clerk's Perpetuation Fund—Clerk; Computer Equipment
#1119.44100.00000.0001 \$ 1,700.00

This is to replace one desktop computer, one laptop, and one desktop scanner. These items are refurbished.

GG made a motion to approve, seconded by DE. Motion carried 6-0.

- General Fund—Clerk; Office Supplies
#1000.21100.00000.0008 \$ 850.00

This is to purchase child support checks. Some of this cost will be received back by the IV-D.

DE made a motion to approve, seconded by PB. Motion carried 6-0.

- General Fund—Circuit Court; Attorney
#1000.31104.00000.0232 \$35,000.00

This is to cover the expenses of the pauper attorneys' claims, depositions, psychological evaluations, etc. The next reimbursement for Pauper will not be until February 2026. This should cover November and December.

BH made a motion to approve, seconded by DE. Motion carried 6-0.

- Supplemental Public Defender Fund—Circuit Court; Attorney
#1200.31104.00000.0232 \$20,000.00

BH made a motion to approve, seconded by PB. Motion carried 6-0.

- General Fund—Planning & Zoning; Board members
#1000.11102.00000.0101 \$ 1,500.00

This is needed for payroll due to the increased number of permits issued.

DE made a motion to approve, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.

- General Fund—Planning & zoning; Social Security
#1000.12100.00000.0101 \$ 175.00

DE made a motion to approve, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.

- General Fund—Planning & Zoning; Office Supplies
#1000.21100.00000.0101 \$ 115.00

DE made a motion to approve, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.

- General fund—County Council; Subscriptions and Dues
#1000.39100.00000.061 \$ 35.00

Hammack stated that only \$140 was budgeted, and \$175 has been spent.

BH made a motion to approve, seconded by DE. Motion carried 6-0.

- General Fund—Jail; Utilities
#1000.35101.00000.0380 \$19,000.00

This additional appropriation request for utilities is for the remainder of 2025. Kelli asked if the bills were higher, or was it underbudgeted?

Chief Deputy Dickenson responded that it was underbudgeted.

GG made a motion to approve, seconded by BH. Motion carried 6-0.

- General Fund—Council; Examination of Records
#1000.51112.00000.0061 \$ 1,266.40

Hammack stated that this is for the Federal audit. It was budgeted in ARPA, however, the invoice came in a little bit over by \$1,266.40. There is no other line item to pay it out of other than General.

DE made a motion to approve, seconded by PB. Motion carried 6-0.

- CEDIT Fund—Commissioners; Building Maintenance (Courthouse)
#7312.36107.00000.0068 \$ 1,425.39

GG made a motion to approve, seconded by DE. Motion carried 6-0.

- CEDIT Fund—Commissioners; Recording Fees
#7312.31501.00000.0068 \$ 105.00

This is for recording a deed.

BH made a motion to approve, seconded by PB. Motion carried 6-0.

- Cumulative Bridge Fund—Highway; Bridge Inspection
#1135.31209.00000.0531 \$24,372.00

Howell stated this is phase 2A of the four-year contract.

DE made a motion to approve, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.

- General Fund—Commissioners; Liability Insurance
#1000.34200.00000.0068 \$23,384.00

Hammack stated that this was for the cyber liability insurance, and the premium increased more than what was appropriated.

PB asked if the County gets hit with a cyber-attack, does the insurance company pay for the ransomware, or do they fight it? How does that get handled? Hammack responded that she was not sure.

Kelli asked Hammack to notify the insurance letting them know all the protections that An Island has in place.

PB made a motion to approve, seconded by DE. Motion carried 6-0.

b) Transfer Request:

- Cash Transfer
FROM: 4937 EMS Replacement Fund \$ 30,000.00
TO: 1161 HFI Grant Fund \$ 30,000.00

This was money appropriated in the budget from the HFI Grant fund, and the County has found out through audits that it cannot move money from HFI to another fund. It has to stay in the fund and be allocated. This transfer moves the money back to the HFI Grant fund.

BH made a motion to approve, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.

- Appropriation Transfer
From: 1173.23101.00000.0533 Gas \$ 7,500.00
TO: 1173.39300.00000.0531 Equipment Rental \$ 7,500.00
Howell stated that this is to pay the contractor for tearing out rock ledges on Apricot Rd.

GG made a motion to approve, seconded by BH. Motion carried 6-0.

- Cash Transfer with Intent to Appropriate
FROM: 1173 MVHR \$200,000.00
FROM: 4923 LIT/EDIT Hwy \$200,000.00
TO: 9141 Local Road/Bridge \$400,000.00
Matching Grant

This is for the County's match for 2026 Community Crossings paving.

BH made a motion to approve, seconded by PB. Motion carried 6-0.

- Cash Transfer
FROM: 1112 LIT/EDIT Fund \$225,087.37
TO: 4934 LIT/EDIT Building \$225,087.37
Maintenance Fund

Hammack stated that in April, the County set up separate LIT/EDIT funds to where they carry their own cash balance, versus being all in one pot.

This cash balance had to be divided up.

Hammack mentioned that back in April, there was an oversight, or overspending, on the jail where the appropriation was \$398,000, and EDIT only bringing in \$274,000. The jail has adjusted a lot of things within their budget, and it ended up coming in at approximately \$76,000. That remaining amount is being covered through EDIT Special Projects, with the intent that any cash balance that is remaining at the end of 2025 will be transferred back to Special Projects.

DE made a motion to approve, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.

- Cash Transfer
FROM: 1112 LIT/EDIT Fund \$107,254.03
TO: 4924 LIT/EDIT Economic \$107,254.03
Development Fund

BH made a motion to approve, seconded by DE. Motion carried 6-0.

- Cash Transfer
FROM: 1112 LIT/EDIT Fund \$779,396.92
TO: 4923 LIT/EDIT Highway \$779,396.92
Fund

PB made a motion to approve, seconded by BH. Motion carried 6-0.

- Cash Transfer
FROM: 1112 LIT/EDIT Fund \$374,677.58
TO: 4921 LIT/EDIT Special \$374,677.58
Projects Fund

DE made a motion to approve, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.

COUNTY COUNCIL

- a) Kelli stated that the County Council and the Commissioners are now accepting letters from residents who are interested in serving on any Local Governing Board for 2026. Letters of Interest can be submitted through the link on the website on the homepage titled "Submit 2026 Board Appointments". The website is perrycounty.in.gov.

Hammack stated that the Auditor is the record keeper, and she has to receive every letter of interest that is received. Her office sends letters to everyone who is appointed, and to those who spoke of interest but did not get the appointment. Her office also needs to send Conflict of Interest forms to those appointed to keep on file.

Hammack stated that any resident who feels more comfortable emailing the Council or Commissioners can do so. Hammack requested that the Council and Commissioners submit that email to her.

- The County Council Organizational Meeting is on Monday, January 5, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.
- b) Kelli announced that this was SG's last meeting and wished him well in the future.
- c) The next Regular meeting is Thursday, December 18, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. at the Courthouse Meeting Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:32 p.m. CST.
BH made a motion to adjourn, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.
Minutes approved this 18th day of December, 2025.

President, Perry County Council

Minutes reviewed by:
Kristinia L. Hammack, Perry County Auditor
Minutes prepared by:
Leisa M. Ecker, Deputy Auditor