

PERRY COUNTY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
May 28, 2026

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), Cory Filley (CF), Gale Garner (GG), Brad Harth (BH) and Paul Brockman (PB). Auditor Kristinia Hammack and Sheriff David Faulkenberg were also present. There was no *Attorney* or *News Representative* present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA

BH made the motion to accept as amended, seconded by DE. Motion carried 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

a) Joan Hess, Clerk

Hess appeared stating she had been denied two months in a row to be put on the agenda to ask for the availability to fill the position in that office, which is needed badly. People are wanting to take their earned vacation time, however, there has to be two people in that office at all times due to the amount of cash that is handled. Hess added she knew the Council's reasonings, but respectfully, if the County has a lawsuit filed against it, most likely that will go to the insurance and will not come out of the General fund. Hess reiterated that she needs to fill this position. Hess asked that somebody explain to her why it cannot be filled? BH stated that there is an Executive Session scheduled for June 1, 2026, to talk about this issue, which is the issues associated with filling this position and how it is going to be resolved. BH added that at any point and time after that, the Council can have a Special Meeting to address this issue. Hess asked to have the Council's word that they would be willing to have a Special Meeting so that filling the position can get taken care of? BH responded that until the County hears from its lawyers on June 1st, the County cannot make that. Hess asked if the Council would give their word that if things progress in the way that the Council feels like it can be done, that the Council would not wait another month? Would the Council have a Special Meeting to address that? CF responded that he would be open to that. Kelli stated that the Council can have a Special Meeting with a 48-hour notice. Hess asked if the Council was willing to do that? Kelli responded that she is willing to have a Special Meeting for almost anything. Kelli stated that the Council was presented in a public meeting with a threat to litigate against the County. Kelli added that the Council has written documentation of that. It was on record in a public meeting. That is why the first 30 days went by. The next 30 days is because the Council had not heard anything, and she spoke with the Council attorney, asking him what an ample time frame would be, and he responded 60 days would be enough time for someone when they say they are going to do something. That would be enough time to either do it or they would not be going to do it. Kelli added that between last month and now, the County received a demand letter, and it is under pending litigation. What the County was told was going to happen did happen. Kelli feels the Council made the right choice by waiting to see what was going to happen. Kelli stated any way, shape, or form, this will cost the County money, whether the County has to hire attorneys, whether the County has to pay somebody out, whether the County has to backpay somebody, there is a lot of situations. Kelli stated that the Council is to be good stewards of the taxpayers and to try and watch and manage that. Hess responded she is trying to be a good steward. BH stated that if appropriate, he would be fully amendable to have a Special Meeting. Kelli added that the Council cannot guarantee the outcome of a Special Meeting.

MINUTES

a) 04.23.2026 Regular meeting

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

b) 04.24.2026 Joint Special Meeting

DE made a motion to approve, seconded by GG. Motion carried 5-0-1 (BH abstained).

c) 05.13.2026 Special Meeting

GG made a motion to approve, seconded by DE. Motion carried 5-0-1 (CF abstained).

AMANDA HINTON, PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE SUPERVISOR

a) Request to fill vacancy

Hammack stated she had sent the Council the email that was received from Hinton. The Registrar resigned, and her last day was May 15th. Hinton requested to be added on the Council agenda meeting. That was all the information that Hammack received.

CF stated he had spoken with Hinton on this day. CF requested to table this at this time. CF stated he is the President of the Health Board, and they are going to look at job descriptions before moving forward. CF added that they will probably be requesting a Special Meeting.

CF made a motion to table this item, seconded by BH. Motion carried 6-0.

KRISTINIA HAMMACK, AUDITOR

a) Cash Transfer to pay back temporary loan from January 2026

- FROM: 1138 Cumulative Capital Development Fund \$100,000.00
- TO: 4800 Capital Projects Fund \$100,000.00

Hammack stated that at the beginning of the year, the County has to do some temporary loans to some of the County funds that do not have the cash reserve, due to the expenses that are all due at the beginning of the year. The County has worked over the years to build up the cash reserves. Spring Settlement was processed, and when the County does a temporary loan, the rule is that the temporary loan has to be paid back within the year that it was borrowed.

CF made a motion to approve the transfer, seconded by BH. Motion carried 6-0.

b) Cash Transfer Request for funds deemed dormant in January 2026.

- FROM: 1000 General Fund \$15,920.00
- To: 9174 FSSA Health Grant \$15,920.00

Hammack stated that last October, the Council was looking at funds in an effort to give some relief to the General Fund. Information was obtained from Judge Goffinet, and this is not an actual grant, even though it was set up in the system as FSSA grant. The auditor's office looked for grant paperwork on this fund, and none was found. Per information received from Judge Goffinet, this is Community Corrections for mental health and drug prevention.

Hammack stated this fund had only been dormant since 2023.

Judge Goffinet stated that this is a grant. Hammack responded that the Auditor's office only receives notice when the funds are coming in from the State, and asked Traci Fischer for paperwork on this. The Auditor's office does not have a grant file on this, as in the guidelines for paying out. Judge Goffinet spoke from the audience, and was not able to be heard on livestream.

Hammack stated it is on the agenda to transfer back into the FSSA Health Grant fund. It was treated as a correction of error, and the money was transferred back into the fund.

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

- FROM: 1000 General Fund \$44,526.42
- TO: 1123 Community Transition Program \$44,526.42

Hammack stated that Judge Goffinet supplied the Indiana Code on this fund. It was deemed dormant as there had not been any activity since 2019. However, based on the Indiana Code, this has purposes for what it could be used for, and states it cannot be transferred to General. BH asked if this fund should have been labeled as a non-reverting fund? Hammack responded yes, and notes have been made.

BH made a motion to return this to the non-reverting fund, seconded by DE. Motion carried 6-0.

- FROM: 1000 General Fund \$ 3,288.72
- TO: 2200 Alternative Dispute Resolution \$ 3,288.72

Hammack stated this money was collected directly from court costs, and is used to pay for mediation for low income. The State specifically determines how these funds are utilized. BH asked if this fund is also non-reverting? Hammack responded yes, it needs to be non-reverting. Judge Goffinet stated that this is a State driven fund of what it can or cannot be used for.

CF made a motion to approve from General, seconded by BH. Motion carried 6-0.

- FROM: 1000 General Fund \$ 8,536.06
TO: 4926 Home Detention Fund \$ 8,536.06

Hammack stated that based on information from Judge Goffinet, this fund was created by the Council to cover the cost of electronic home detention for indigent defendants who cannot post bond, but have serious health concerns.

Hammack stated this is a home rule fund. Her office has searched and cannot find an Ordinance on this.

Judge Goffinet responded to what this fund was created for. CF asked when it was created, and Judge Goffinet responded 2020.

Kelli stated that if the Council does not have an Ordinance, or cannot find an Ordinance, and a new one will have to be created to establish what Goffinet stated. This is because funds are supposed to have Ordinances. On the other hand, it could be left in General, and on a case-by-case basis, Judge Goffinet could bring it to the Council. Goffinet responded it is nice to have the money readily available when it is needed. However, it would be up to the Council to decide how this is handled.

An Ordinance will be created for this.

CF made a motion to table until such time as they have an Ordinance, seconded by DE. Motion carried 6-0.

c) Additional Appropriation Request

- General Fund--Clerk; Office Supplies
#1000.21100.00000.0001 \$500.00

Kelli asked if this is some of items that were purchased for the election? Hess responded that anything she purchased for the election went to the Election Board.

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

- Community Crossings Fund—Highway Department; County Road Improvements
#9141.44501.00000.0534 \$783,988.00

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

- MVHR Fund—Highway Department; Bituminous
#1173.23300.00000.0531 \$400,000.00

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

- HFI Grant—Health Department; School Liaison
#1161.11604.00000.0610 \$21,840.00
- HFI Grant—Health Department; Social Security
#1161.12100.00000.0610 \$ 1,710.00

Hammack stated that in December 2025, it was brought to the Council for an additional appropriation in the amount of \$23,550. It was not actually an additional appropriation. The Council granted the additional appropriation in 2025, but none of that money was spent.

The actual intention was to move appropriation from 2025 budget to 2026. In working on the HFI report with Amanda Hinton, it was off \$23,000. \$23,550 was not spent out of the 2025 budget, so that permission to spend appropriation needs to be appropriated in 2026. It was just requested a month early.

DE made a motion to approve the \$23,550, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.

- HFI Grant—Health Department; Office Supplies
#1161.21100.00000.0610

Hammack stated that the Health department went before the Commissioners and received permission to put a sign there. Multiple bids were reviewed and approved. Kelli asked that this fits the criteria of the grant and the State has approved it? Sanitarian Kim Robertson responded yes.

Kelli asked if there are any reoccurring monthly fees? Robertson responded that they provide a program and a five-year warranty, and it covers everything as far as installation. The only thing that the County is responsible for is the electricity from the building to the sign.

BH asked what information will be listed on this sign? Robertson responded that it fits in the KPI as an educational message board. Robertson stated that for her side, it is the environmental side such as a septic. The whole building will use the message board, and the information changes constantly. It offers the opportunity to reach a different group of people. There is quite a bit of traffic with the school, which grandparents and parents will see it. This could allow quite a bit of information to the public.

BH stated he did not know how effective this sign will be, and whether spending that amount of money for a sign for this purpose is what he would consider a good advertisement expense. He added that the location is not that wonderful.

GG asked if this money is sign specific, as it is a lot of money. Robertson responded it is left from last year's HFI.

CF made a motion to approve, seconded by PB. Motion carried 4-1-1 (GG abstained, BH opposed).

STEVE HOWELL, HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

a) Vacancy

Howell stated that he had another employee quit. Howell was seeking permission to advertise for another Operator. Hammack asked what will that put the County at, and Howell responded four truck drivers and four operators. Kelli asked if these openings are put on Indeed, and Hammack responded that they are always put on Indeed. Kelli asked if there are any other platforms where Hammack could advertise? Hammack responded she and First Deputy Kelli Wilgus have had conference calls with a vendor who helps with onboarding/offboarding HR, and also applications. There is a government website where people go for government jobs. With a push of a button, it would also go to Indeed and ZipRecruiter. Hammack stated that currently job postings are on Indeed and the County website.

Howell stated that he has been getting a lot of applications, but they do not have CDLs. Kelli asked Howell that he is willing to send to CDL school with some type of commitment? Howell responded that has been done a couple of times in the past. Kelli asked Howell that if the County had a program in writing, some type of process where the County paid for individuals to get their CDL with a commitment that they would stay two years or whatever? Would that be helpful to Howell? Howell responded that the County really does not have the money to send somebody to CDL school. Kelli responded that there are areas in the Highway fund where that could happen. Howell responded that it was a possibility. Howell stated he gives the name and phone number of a facility in Kentucky. Kelli asked if Howell offers that with a commitment, the County will pay for it? Howell responded no. Kelli asked what needs to be done to get that considered? Howell responded that the County has to have the money to pay for it. Kelli responded that she thought that can be accomplished. She added with all the Highway open positions, there is money there and it has been building up. Kelli feels that each person who applies that Howell feels is worthy to be hired needs to be offered that, where the County can pay with some sort of commitment where they stay X amount of time. Howell was willing to work this out with the Commissioners.

PB made a motion to allow Howell to advertise the Operator position, seconded by DE. Motion carried 6-0.

COUNTY COUNCIL

a) Amendment to County Ordinance "Reimbursement to County by Prisoners/Detainees"

Kelli stated she spoke to the Council Attorney regarding this.

Kelli read the Ordinance aloud.

No vote was taken, as it will be read again at the June 25, 2026 meeting for the vote.

b) ATTC Abatement for 2026/Pay 2027

Kelli stated she saw a few small discrepancies. On the SB1 Form, they listed that they would hire 492 employees, and they have 489. ATTC expected salaries to be \$22,753,000. It is \$35,967,000. Kelli added they are down a few employees but up significantly in the salaries.

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

c) Sheriff Vehicle Update

Chief Deputy Eric Dickenson stated there has been an update on the equipment, which has a cost. An invoice was received for just the equipment. Dickenson stated that they are questioning do they pay Ohio Valley Towing? Do they pay these direct, as it was addressed to the Perry County Sheriff's Office? Dickenson added they were ready to pay Safety Systems direct. They have listed everything on the invoice that was purchased for the upfits. They are waiting on six brackets, which are fabricated brackets that are a necessity in putting the cars together.

Dickenson stated that the Sheriff's office has been in communication with Ohio Valley Towing, asking them to look over the cost of everything, with trying to remain on or below budget.

Kelli stated that originally the Council had approved the Ohio Valley Towing quote, however, now it will be broken down into Ohio Valley Towing labor and equipment being paid to Safety Systems. Kelli would like to get approval of this change due to it being a difference of what was originally approved.

BH made a motion to make that adjustment, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.

The next regular scheduled County Council Meeting on Thursday, June 25, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. at the Courthouse.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:09 p.m. CST.

PB made a motion to adjourn, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.

Minutes approved this 25th day of June, 2026.

President, Perry County Council

Minutes reviewed by:

Kristinia L. Hammack, Perry County Auditor

Minutes prepared by:

Leisa M. Ecker, Deputy Auditor