

**Hancock County Budget, Efficiency & Revenue Committee
And Regular Council Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2026**

The County Council of Hancock County, Indiana met in the County Commissioner & Council Meeting Room in the Courthouse Annex located at 111 American Legion Place Greenfield, Indiana 46140 on the 7th day of January 2026 at the hour of 8:30 AM in accordance with the rules of the Council.

Councilmembers Jim Shelby, Keely Butrum, Robin Lowder, Mary Noe, Kent Fisk, Scott Wooldridge, Clark Smith, Auditor Debra Carnes, Financial Administrator Mary Bowmer, and County Attorney Scott Benkie were present.

Election of President and Vice President

Councilmembers welcomed new member, Clark Smith, to the board.

Councilmember Fisk made a motion to revoke the motions from last month for President and Vice President. Councilmember Shelby seconded. **Motion Passed 7-0.**

Councilmember Noe ask for nominations for President and Vice President. Councilmember Fisk nominated Scott Wooldridge for President and Robin Lowder for Vice President. Councilmember Butrum seconded. **Motion Passed 7-0.**

Councilmember Shelby made a motion to close nominations. Councilmember Butrum seconded. **Motion Passed 7-0.**

2025/2026 Budget Issues

Councilmembers reviewed fund balances, discussed possible changes to the target fund balance resolution, commissioners are continuing to work on a 5-year capital plan, discussed future 2026 general obligation bond, discussed Prosecutor efficiency study, approved salary amendment and additional appropriation for new Media Specialist, and the 1782 Notice was received.

Sheriff

Sheriff Burkhart played a short video and discussed the Jail Navigation Program that began in July 2022. In 2025, they had 135 inmates that went through the program, with 108 of them graduating and 15 returning. Councilmembers agreed they were very happy with the program. ARPA funding will end in 2026 and the total cost of the program for 2027 will be \$322,976.

A request was made for 15 new police Tahoe's at a cost of \$833,280. Councilmember Shelby stated it should come out of the 2026 GO bond or pay from County General and reimburse from the 2026 GO bond. County Attorney Scott Benkie will create a reimbursement resolution for the next meeting.

Sheriff Burkhart proposed hiring 5 additional Court Security Officers at \$53,560 each, totaling \$361,233.60. Councilmember Shelby would like to put them in the 2027 budget. Councilmember Wooldridge would like to hire 3 now and the other 2 next year. Councilmembers had discussion.

Auditor Business

Auditor Carnes stated that Fund 4700 Self Insurance needs to be appropriated so liability claims can be paid this year. Councilmembers agreed to advertise \$447,424.

Minutes

Councilmember Fisk made a motion to approve the minutes for December 3, 2025. Councilmember Lowder seconded. **Motion carried 6-0.** Councilmember Noe abstained.

Adjourned 11:15 AM

Councilmember Shelby adjourned the meeting.

Approved this day:

Scott Wooldridge, President

Robin Lowder, Vice President

James Shelby, Councilmember

Mary Noe, Councilmember

Kent Fisk, Councilmember

Keely Butrum, Councilmember

Clark Smith, Councilmember

Attest: _____
Debra Carnes, Hancock County Auditor