



THE MARTIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
March 3, 2026
MINUTES

The Martin County Board of Commissioners convened in a regular session on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, in the Commissioners’ Room at the Courthouse located at 129 Main Street, Shoals, Indiana. Commissioners present were Paul R. George, Retha Warner, and Aaron Summers. Also present were Attorney David Lett and Auditor Michelle Norris.

The meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 5:30 p.m.

RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES & CLAIMS

The minutes from the regular meeting of February 17, 2026, and the special session of February 23, 2026, were approved with a motion made by Commissioner Warner, seconded by Commissioner Summers. All in favor, motion passed. A motion was made by Commissioner Warner to approve the claims and allowances, seconded by Commissioner Summers. All in favor, motion passed.

RE: HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT – BRIDGE 58 FINAL INSPECTION; EQUIPMENT STATUS; SURPLUS AUCTION PROCEEDS

Highway Administrative Assistant Theresa Ray reported (via Zoom) that the final inspection for Bridge 58 is complete, and a signature is required for submission to INDOT. Commissioner Summers made a motion to approve the final inspection and acceptance for Bridge 58. Commissioner Warner seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed. In response to a public question, President George stated Bridge 58 is located on Brickyard Bridge Road.

Administrative Assistant Ray further reported that a John Deere tractor remains down pending parts, with repairs expected upon parts arrival, and that all other equipment is operational with crews hauling rock across the county. She noted the county’s surplus auction concluded earlier in the day, generating a little over \$15,000 from the sale of three old dump trucks and two pickups, and confirmed that these proceeds will return to the Highway budget.

RE: EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATES

Emergency Management Director Andy Ringwald reported that March is severe weather month and encouraged monitoring National Weather Service communications. He noted Greene County’s severe weather training will be held on March 23, 2026, and Martin County’s session is scheduled for April 13, 2026, with additional siren tests anticipated during the third week of March as part of Severe Weather Week.

Director Ringwald reported recent plumbing replacements due to lime buildup at the EMA building and presented a quote of \$3,100 for a commercial-grade water softener, which exceeds his building maintenance budget. The Board directed him to obtain a quote for a non-commercial unit and report back at the next meeting.

RE: DEPUTY BODY CAMERAS

Council Member Monty Gregory reported that, when the grant was proposed to the Council for the deputy body cameras, there was discussion—attributed to a comment by Jim Hamby—supporting equipping all reserves rather than having only one camera available on standby. The number of units was increased from fifteen to up to twenty to avoid unnecessary travel for pick-up, and the price point was reported as favorable. Auditor Michelle Norris identified potential funding through Public Safety LIT and will coordinate with the Sheriff regarding available funds and plans. No formal action was requested by the Commissioners at

this time. Commissioner Summers asked if there was an inmate count; there was no inmate count provided by the Sheriff's Department.

RE: AMBULANCE REPORTING; OVERTIME AND COLLECTION SERVICES

Council Member Monty Gregory stated if the Commissioners obtain an ambulance report, the Council would like it forwarded to them also. President George stated they expect to have a quarterly report at their next meeting. Auditor Norris reported she sent an email to all county auditors regarding ambulance collection services and received three responses; those three use a collection service. Auditor Norris stated it was discussed at the Council meeting that representatives from the Council and Commissioners should visit Pike County to learn about their successful model. Council Member Monty Gregory noted Pike County may also be doing convalescent runs, while Martin County Ambulance may not have the staff for that because one of the concerns is the County is paying more overtime right now; the Council had asked for an explanation of the overtime. No motion was made; the item remains for follow-up.

RE: PROSECUTOR – CHILD SUPPORT COMPUTER PROCUREMENT AND INVENTORY

Prosecutor Aureola Vincz requested guidance on purchasing a dedicated computer for child support operations located in the Courthouse. President George advised that it is preferable for the Prosecutor's office to purchase the computer from its fund so that it remains on the Prosecutor's inventory, with IT to restrict the device to the required website. Prosecutor Vincz acknowledged and will proceed accordingly.

RE: SHOALS ALLEY VACATION NEAR SHOALS HOLINESS CHURCH

Attorney David Lett reported that the Town of Shoals has been approached to vacate an alley running between Capital Avenue and U.S. 50, just west of the Shoals Holiness Church. All adjoining owners must be contacted, including the Board of Commissioners, which owns the Sheriff's Department garden lot abutting the alley. The alley is overgrown and not in use, and the church reportedly has a shed encroaching on the boundary. Attorney Lett confirmed the County has property access from the west side of the lot and that other adjoining owners also retain access via the adjacent street. He outlined the town's procedure: petition and advertisement by the church, a public hearing, and a decision by the Shoals Town Council; if vacated, the alley would be divided 50/50 between adjoining owners. Commissioners indicated they are agreeable so long as access to county property is maintained. Formal notice will be provided to the Board by the town, and no motion was made pending official notice.

RE: BRIDGE DAMAGE LITIGATION – AUTHORIZATION TO PROCEED

President George raised the matter of the damaged bridge, bridge #44, noting more than three years have elapsed without resolution and that non-legal efforts, including calls and letters, have been ineffective. Attorney Lett advised that to proceed, an updated repair estimate will be required. Commissioner Summers recalled a prior estimate approximately two years old for \$69,000 and acknowledged it must be refreshed. Commissioner Warner made a motion to authorize the County Attorney to proceed with litigation regarding the damaged bridge. Commissioner Summers seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

RE: EMPLOYEE AIR MED CARE RENEWAL (AIR EVAC) – FY 2026–2027

Auditor Norris presented the annual Air Med Care/Air Evac renewal for coverage from April 4, 2026, through April 4, 2027, for 117 employees at \$75.00 per person, totaling \$8,775.00, the same rate as the prior year. Commissioner Warner stated this is a valuable employee benefit, noting prior utilization, and made a motion to approve the Air Med Care invoice in the amount of \$8,775.00. Commissioner Summers seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

RE: COURTHOUSE CLOSURE FOR TRAINING – MARCH 11, 2026

Auditor Norris reported that the Judge and Sheriff's Department have arranged training with Deputy Eric Doane for courthouse staff on March 11, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., including instruction and departmental evaluations. She requested closing the Courthouse during the training so all staff may attend. Commissioner Warner made a motion to close the

Courthouse from 10:00 a.m. to approximately 11:30 a.m. on March 11, 2026, for the training. Commissioner Summers seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

RE: OUT-OF-COUNTY WORKFORCE TAX CONCEPT RELATED TO NSA CRANE

Council Member Monty Gregory raised a proposal to explore a local tax mechanism on out-of-county individuals working at Naval Support Activity (NSA) Crane and other local workites, noting an estimate that approximately 1,300 non-resident workers enter Martin County daily. He stated the concept is intended to increase county revenue without adding costs to county residents, citing anecdotal references to similar practices possibly used elsewhere, such as a flat amount per pay period. Attorney David Lett stated he was not aware of such a mechanism under current Indiana local income tax statutes and recommended legal research, including consultation with tax counsel, to assess feasibility, applicability to federal and state employees and contractors, and administrative considerations. President George directed that the matter be researched further, with no decision taken at this time.

RE: OFFICE RELOCATION ASSISTANCE AND SURVEYOR'S OFFICE MOVE

Auditor Norris publicly thanked the Highway Department for assisting with the relocation of the Surveyor's Office on March 1, 2026, noting that at least four personnel worked approximately three hours moving heavy desks and filing cabinets. She also thanked Custodian Missy Kneip for her efforts and indicated that six large desks were disassembled and moved, with items stored at the former recycling center. Auditor Norris stated that at least two desks will be needed and decisions will need to be made on the remaining surplus pieces. Attorney Lett recommended waiting to take action regarding the surplus until it is known what will be needed after the renovation project. Attorney Lett stated he had notified the building owner that the county would be out of the building.

RE: BUILDING RENOVATION PROPOSALS – MAIN STREET FACILITY OFFICES AND ADA RESTROOM

Attorney Lett reported that two proposals were received by the advertised deadline of March 2, 2026, at noon, for constructing two separate offices at the Main Street end of the former recycling center building and renovating the small office and the east-side restroom to ensure ADA compliance. He identified the proposers as Jack's Construction of Montgomery and Streets Contracting of Loogootee and noted he would distribute copies to the Commissioners. Attorney Lett clarified that proposals were noticed for opening at this meeting, but the Commissioners would not make a selection tonight, recommending that the Board study the proposals and determine at the next meeting whether and with whom to negotiate, and emphasizing the Board retains the right to reject all proposals and reinstate the process. President George confirmed the project scope would result in three offices and an ADA-compliant restroom. No decision was made and no prices were read into the record.

RE: COURTHOUSE DOWNSTAIRS RESTROOMS

Attorney Lett stated he has been trying to find someone to give him guidance regarding the bathroom project downstairs in the Courthouse in order to meet ADA standards and requested technical guidance for drafting specifications, particularly regarding plumbing and layout. President George and Council Member Monty Gregory referenced prior plans reviewed in 2025, including options to reconfigure stalls and ensure sufficient wheelchair clearances, grab bars, appropriate toilet heights, and sink plumbing to allow wheelchair clearance. The Board agreed to reach out to architect firm, Donovan and Donovan, to locate existing drawings and proceed toward renovation.

RE: MOTOR VEHICLE TAX REVENUE RECEIPTS AND TIMING

A question was raised regarding the timing and amounts of recent wheel tax distributions. Auditor Norris reported receipts were approximately \$70 and \$600 for January and February respectively, which must be apportioned among Loogootee, Shoals, and Crane, indicating that receipts to date have been modest. She is checking with the State on the remittance cycle to determine whether distributions are made on a thirty-day or ninety-day lag. President George noted expectations were that a clearer revenue picture may emerge by July

for the first year and observed that commercial vehicle payments due in January might skew receipts, though early distributions were lower than hoped.

RE: CEMETERY ROAD MAINTENANCE INQUIRY

Monty Wolf inquired about responsibility and possible assistance for the road in Mount Union Cemetery, which is experiencing slippage on a hillside, complicating funerary access. President George stated township trustees are generally responsible for cemetery maintenance, except for Green Cemetery, which is owned by Martin County, and that the County typically provides a one-time annual gravel dressing before Memorial Day. Mr. Wolf described potential use of heavy concrete buffers and grading to stabilize the roadbed but noted resource limitations for transporting and setting large barriers. Commissioners discussed feasibility and equipment needs, including backhoe work to establish a level base for any barriers. Dana Strange suggested seeking grant assistance through the Martin County Community Foundation, citing a recent example from Goodwill Cemetery.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Warner and seconded by Commissioner Summers. All were in favor, and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at 5:30 PM.

Paul R. George


Retha Warner


Aaron C. Summers

ATTEST:



Michelle Norris, Martin County Auditor