

THE MARTIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
May 12, 2026
MINUTES

The Martin County Board of Commissioners convened in a regular session on Tuesday, May 12, 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 was 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 April 28, 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.

Auditor Michelle Norris then presented additional claims requiring approval. The first was for Zoll in the amount of \$1,505.26 for heart monitor replacement batteries. The second was for Stryker for \$1,775.00, which was a second invoice for updates related to preventative maintenance that had not been previously submitted. The third item was a claims docket report for surplus tax sale properties, requesting \$701.68 from surplus funds to pay the taxes due on those properties. A motion was made by Commissioner Summers to approve the updated claims, including the three additional items. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Warner. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

RE: LIBRARY EXPANSION AND RENOVATION UPDATE

Sylvia Albaugh and Shoals Public Library Board Members provided the Commissioners with an update on the recently completed expansion and renovation project of the Shoals Carnegie library, which was funded in part through an OCRA grant secured with the assistance of the Commissioners. They expressed their gratitude for the County's support. Ms. Albaugh stated the parking lot addition has also been completed, which features two handicapped spaces along with eight additional spaces. The Commissioners were formally invited to a ribbon-cutting ceremony scheduled for Friday, June 5, 2026, at 1:00 PM. A public grand opening event is planned for the following day, Saturday, June 6, 2026, from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Ms. Albaugh announced that Alyssa Fithian was appointed as the new library director, following her recent retirement. Library Director Fithian informed the Commissioners that the grand opening will feature giveaways, three separate story times for children, crafts, and refreshments.

RE: HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT ISSUES

Jeff Asdell addressed the Commissioners for a second time regarding the deteriorating condition of Rattlesville Road, which is on the North end of Saint Joseph Road. He presented photographs showing severe washouts and potholes, including one deep enough to contain a Mountain Dew can, creating a hazardous situation on the single-lane road. Mr. Asdell stated he had previously raised these concerns in February and had spoken with the highway superintendent on April 27, but no action had been taken, and the road's condition has since worsened. He expressed particular concern for an elderly neighbor who uses a four-wheeler and could be injured. President George acknowledged he had visited the road after a call from Mr. Asdell's wife and confirmed the poor conditions. President George assured Mr. Asdell that the potholes would be addressed within the next week and that the department would schedule the gradall to perform necessary ditching work within the next two to three weeks. President George also noted that he believes a section of the road is slated to be submitted for the next round of Community Crossings Matching Grant (CCMG) funding for paving next year.

Robert Woods, who lives on the other end of the road, confirmed the severity of the potholes mentioned by Mr. Asdell. He also requested that Wood Road be considered for future chip and seal projects.

Charles Day, a resident of Lyon Lane, reported that equipment, which is too wide for the lane, has been repeatedly damaging the bark on two large, historic white oak trees located on the edge of the road, which will eventually kill them. He requested a guardrail be installed to protect the trees. He also reported that a drainpipe was smashed and abandoned by equipment operators. President George stated he would have the highway superintendent inspect the area, but he did not know what they could do about the tree at this time.

Mr. Day inquired about the official status of a portion of the road on his property, which is partially closed, but which he believes should be closed all the way to the section line. Attorney David Lett asked Mr. Day when the road was closed; Mr. Day replied probably in the late 60s or early 70s. Attorney Lett stated he would need to research county records to determine the road's official status.

Mary Smith, a resident of Quackenbush Spring Road, addressed the board regarding a significant drainage issue near her property. She reported that one of two large sewers located at a "Y" in the road past her house is blocked with large logs and debris following recent heavy rains. Ms. Smith expressed concern that another significant rainfall could cause water to overflow the road, as the blocked culvert is unable to handle the flow, and that cleaning the debris is complicated by the presence of creeks on both sides of the road, making it difficult to find a place to deposit the cleared material. President George stated he would ask the Highway Department to inspect the site this week to assess the situation and determine the best course of action, which may involve hauling the debris away. He confirmed this was a different location than a previous issue that had been worked on.

RE: 911 CALL HANDLING EQUIPMENT UPGRADE

Barry Ritter, owner of Ritter Strategic Services and a former executive director of the Indiana Statewide 911 Board, addressed the Commissioners regarding the county's 911 call handling equipment. Mr. Ritter explained that the current Solacom equipment in the Martin County 911 center, installed around 2018, is beyond its end of life and is now considered obsolete. He stated that in February 2026, the manufacturer terminated support for the system, and Indigital, the State's 911 network provider for the region, can no longer guarantee support or repairs, viewing the aging technology as a cybersecurity issue for the statewide network. He stressed the importance of developing a plan for a full system replacement, which includes the computer hardware and software used by dispatchers.

Attorney Lett raised a concern about the longevity of a new equipment investment if the State's network provider changes when Indigital's contract expires around 2028. Mr. Ritter assured him that due to Indiana's home rule and 911 statutes, any new network provider would be required to integrate with the call handling systems already in place, so a new purchase would not be necessary. Commissioner Summers inquired about grant opportunities, but Mr. Ritter noted that such funding is not plentiful. President George inquired about lease options, which Mr. Ritter confirmed are offered by some vendors. Mr. Ritter clarified that the current system is still functional and that multiple layers of redundancy are in place, including default routing to other counties like Lawrence County, to ensure every 911 call is answered even if the local system were to fail. He offered to request an updated budgetary quote from Indigital so the county can begin planning. Attorney Lett advised that the county would need to explore options from several vendors and determine whether to request quotes, bids, or proposals, noting that a decision would be needed by July for budget discussions in August. Stephanie Jones of Motorola Solutions introduced herself as a local representative and offered her support.

RE: BRIDGE UPDATE

Attorney Lett provided an update regarding bridge #44. He reported that a formal complaint has been drafted. He is currently working with another attorney to "fine-tune" the complaint to ensure it is accurate and complete before proceeding. President George urged him to continue pursuing the matter.

RE: ANTIVIRUS AND BACKUP MONITORING CONTRACT

Auditor Norris presented a contract renewal proposal from Eck-Mundy for antivirus and backup monitoring services. The number of covered devices has increased from 109 to 113. The monthly labor cost for backup monitoring has decreased from \$600 to \$460 because the county has switched to Eck-

Mundy's recommended backup solution, which they monitor themselves, eliminating the need to monitor the previous Barracuda system. The cost for CrowdStrike antivirus monitoring is \$573 per month, the hourly labor rate remains at \$115 per hour, and the service trip charge remains at \$100 per location. Overall, the new contract represents an approximate 23% decrease from the current one. A motion was made by Commissioner Warner to approve the Eck-Mundy contract, including the antivirus monitoring at \$573 per month, the backup software monitoring at \$460 per month, the hourly labor rate of \$115, and the \$100 service trip charge. Commissioner Summers seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

RE: COURTHOUSE CLOSING FOR TRAINING

Auditor Norris requested the courthouse be closed on the afternoon of May 20, 2026, for an active shooter training session that was rescheduled from March due to a power outage. The closure would be from 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM to allow staff to attend. A motion was made by Commissioner Summers to close the Courthouse from 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM on May 20, 2026, for the training. Commissioner Warner seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

RE: ANNEX BUILDING PROJECT AND SURPLUS FURNITURE

Attorney Lett reported that he and President George met with the contractor for the annex building project. Construction of the new offices is planned to begin after the July Fourth holiday, with a total renovation budget of approximately \$65,000 to create three offices and an ADA-compliant restroom while retaining a central storage area. There is a significant amount of surplus furniture in the building that must be removed. Auditor Norris has already offered some items to the City of Loogootee and will reach out to the towns of Shoals and Crane. It was agreed that any remaining items, deemed to be in rough shape, would likely be sent for recycling. The Historical Society has expressed interest in one specific table from the original courtroom.

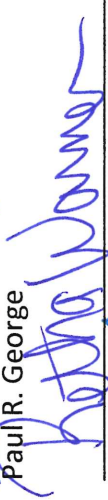
RE: HISTORICAL RECORDS AND STORAGE

Auditor Norris relayed a request from the Historical Society regarding the possibility of moving historical books currently stored in the old courtroom back to the society's basement, which would require a small blackout repair at the back of the building to prevent water entry. The discussion then turned to the general issue of records storage. The prosecutor's office has files that need to be moved into the basement, and it was determined that the prosecutor's files should be given priority for the most accessible storage space. Auditor Norris will follow up with the State archives to determine the retention requirements for these records before any are moved.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

The Courthouse will be closed on May 25th for Memorial Day. 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 6:30 PM. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 26, 2026, at 5:30 PM.



Paul R. George


Retha Warner


Aaron C. Summers

ATTEST: 

Michelle Norris, Martin County Auditor