

THE MARTIN COUNTY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
February 2, 2026
MINUTES

The Martin County Council convened in a regular session on Monday, February 2, 2026, in the Commissioners' Room at the Courthouse located at 129 Main Street, Shoals, Indiana. Council Members attending were Warren D. Albright, Monty Gregory, Jim Hamby, Sheri Bowling, Gerald D. Montgomery, Jim Woody, and Jordan Berry. Also attending was Auditor Michelle Norris.

President Albright called the meeting to order with the Pledge to the Flag at 6:30 pm.

RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

President Albright asked if members had a chance to review the minutes of the last meeting. Monty Gregory moved to approve the minutes from January 5, 2026. The motion was seconded by Jim Woody. All in favor; motion passed unanimously.

RE: SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING

Soil and Water Conservation District Coordinator Brenda Norris invited Council members to attend the SWCD annual meeting on Monday, February 9th. Doors open at 6:00 p.m., with the meal at 6:30 p.m. Coordinator Norris stated tickets may be purchased at the door for anyone who would like to attend.

RE: FSG CONTRACT FOR 2026

Auditor Michelle Norris presented the annual contract with FSG (Financial Solutions Group) for budget assistance and projections, noting no changes from the prior year and a not-to-exceed amount of \$25,000. She stated last year's usage was approximately \$25,000 and recommended renewal to assist with anticipated budget changes in 2026. A motion was made by Monty Gregory to accept FSG's contract for 2026 as presented, seconded by Sheri Bowling. All in favor; motion passed unanimously.

RE: SALARY AND WAGE ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS (2026-5)

Auditor Norris presented amendments to the Salary and Wage Ordinance:

1. General Fund -- Jail -- Part-Time Jail Officers: The hourly rate was previously increased to \$25.00/hour last year; however, a typographical error reduced it to \$22.00/hour in the current ordinance, causing a regular part-time employee's pay, who was paid \$22.29 last year, to decrease to \$22.00 for the last two pay periods. After consulting with the Sheriff, Auditor Norris requested correction to set the rate at \$23.00/hour for the part-time jail officers.
2. General Fund -- Court -- Transcriptions/Depositions: Auditor Norris explained the need to formalize compensation for court reporters transcribing old court cases, citing a recent bill at \$4.75 per page for transcription done outside normal hours. Auditor Norris stated her office consulted a local accountant and they were advised that if the individual is already a county employee, payment should be processed through payroll rather than as a contractor. Monty Gregory queried whether \$4.75/page is standard; Amy Kippenbrock, Clerk of Dubois County and a candidate for District 63 State Representative, stated in her county, \$5.00/page is common when billed to defendants or attorneys and is often handled as a contract. Auditor Norris confirmed there is a line in the court budget for these costs and requested assignment of a rate for payroll processing.
3. Motor Vehicle Highway (MVH) -- Restricted and Unrestricted: The Highway Department identified a candidate to fill a long-vacant position who does not yet have a CDL. The department plans to send the employee for CDL training in April and requested adding a second "Operator without CDL" position to the Salary and Wage Ordinance, with no net

increase in budget, funded by transferring within existing operator lines. Discussion noted CDL training costs ranging from approximately \$5,000 to \$10,000 and whether the county could require a service commitment or repayment. The goal is to transition the employee to the CDL operator line upon obtaining the CDL.

A motion was made by Monty Gregory to approve the 2026 Salary and Wage Ordinance amendments (2026-5) covering the jail part-time officer rate correction, court transcription/deposition compensation setup, and MVH operator without CDL addition, seconded by Jim Hamby. All in favor; motion passed unanimously.

RE: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS – REASSESSMENT FUND (FUND 1224)

Auditor Norris made a request on behalf of Assessor Carolyn McGuire, who was unable to attend the meeting due to a prior commitment, for the purchase of a new printer due to equipment beyond life expectancy, duplexing failures, and manual feed issues. Appropriation:

New Printer (Fund 1224 – Reassessment) \$6,940

A motion was made by Jim Hamby to approve the additional appropriation in the Reassessment Fund for \$6,940, seconded by Jordan Berry. All in favor; motion passed unanimously.

RE: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION – SHERIFF WARRANT FEE FUND (FUND 4916)

Auditor Norris requested an additional appropriation to cover Indiana Department of Revenue warrant service fees paid to the Sheriff. The Sheriff receives fees regularly from the State Comptroller for serving warrants; last year, the Sheriff's warrant activity exceeded the budgeted amount (\$3,500 budgeted; approximately \$5,700 earned), necessitating an additional appropriation to pay out the earned fees. Documentation is provided by the Sheriff's Department for each warrant.

Appropriation:

Indiana Department of Revenue Warrant Fees (Fund 4916) \$2,200

Monty Gregory moved to approve the additional appropriation of \$2,200 to Fund 4916, seconded by Jordan Berry. All in favor; motion passed.

RE: AMBULANCE SERVICE FUND (FUND 4002) – GRANT FUNDS

Auditor Norris discussed a previously approved grant awarded to the Ambulance Department in 2025 in the amount of \$10,166.93 in the Radio, Lights, and Sirens line which has not yet been spent. The Ambulance Service asked for an additional appropriation this year to be able to spend those funds. A motion was made by Jordan Berry to approve the additional appropriation in the Ambulance Service Fund 4002 in the amount of \$10,166.93, seconded by Monty Gregory. All in favor, motion passed.

RE: AMBULANCE SERVICE OPERATING BUDGET – QUARTER ALLOCATION

Auditor Norris revisited the Council's prior discussion to fund the Ambulance operating budget by quarter. Discussion addressed insurance timing (liability and worker's compensation due in July), intra-category "pencil transfers" without Council approval, and the need to avoid disrupting ongoing claims already approved by the Commissioners. Council Members emphasized maintaining necessary lines (fuel, vehicle maintenance) while implementing a quarterly approach. The Council agreed to fund 25% of the approved annual operating budget for the current quarter, with adjustments to be considered at the next meeting if running over. A motion was made by Jordan Berry to defund 75% of the Ambulance Service's approved annual operating budget in the proposed/advertised lines, seconded by Jim Hamby. All in favor; motion passed.

RE: PILOT (PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES) DISCUSSION

Kristi Risk, candidate for Indiana State Senate District 39, raised questions regarding State and National Forest acreage and the County's PILOT revenue. Auditor Norris confirmed Martin County currently receives a single PILOT payment of approximately \$18,000 for national forest land in Martin County. Ms. Risk offered to work with the County to investigate whether the County is receiving the correct PILOT compensation. Council members expressed appreciation and noted the impact of various kinds of untaxable land within the County.

RE: AMBULANCE SERVICE STATUS UPDATE

Jonah Shaw asked if the Council had an update regarding the status of the Ambulance Service contract. Monty Gregory stated the contract is still in negotiations and the Council is still responsible for the budget for the year. Monty Gregory noted the current director has bid to run the service; if changes occur, the Commissioners will manage the transition. The Council opted for quarter-by-quarter funding to maintain closer control pending resolution, emphasizing the County's obligation to maintain ambulance service continuity.

RE: COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT RECOGNITION

Council Members expressed appreciation for the Martin County Highway Department's timely Winter operations, with positive feedback from constituents.

With no further business, a motion was made by Monty Gregory to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Jim Woody. All in favor, motion passed. The next regular meeting of the Martin County Council is scheduled for March 2, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. in the Martin County Courthouse.



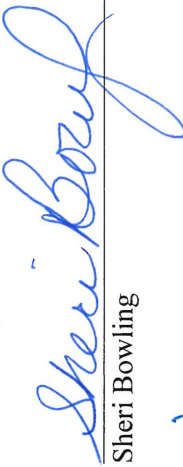
Warren D. Albright



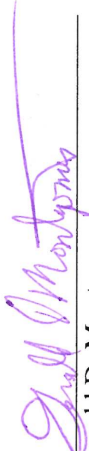
Monty Gregory



Jim Hamby



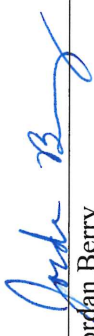
Sheri Bowling



Gerald D. Montgomery



Jim Woody



Jordan Berry

ATTEST: 

Michelle Norris, Martin County Auditor