Martin County

THE MARTIN COUNTY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
May 4, 2026
MINUTES

The Martin County Council convened in a regular session on Monday, May 4, 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 made a motion to approve the minutes from April 6, 2026, seconded by Jim Woody. All in favor, motion passed.

RE: SOUTHERN INDIANA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (SIDC) UPDATE

SIDC Executive Director Greg Jones provided a comprehensive overview of SIDC's projects and initiatives in the region. He highlighted SIDC's role in securing grant funding to reduce the tax burden on residents. Mr. Jones stated SIDC is working on infrastructure planning for communities such as Elnora, Oaktown, Spencer, and Shoals with the water and stormwater plan. There are ongoing projects in Jasonville, Odon, Worthington, and they are finishing the Shoals wastewater project. A significant project mentioned was the Greene County EDA water project, which will supply additional water for the Westgate Crane Technology Park. The Economic Development Administration is considering doubling down on funding to include a new water tower in Daviess County to further support the park and the surrounding area, including the town of Crane.

Mr. Jones discussed SIDC's involvement in defense-related initiatives, including assisting the military in securing community grants. An ongoing engineering study for the Town of Crane's wastewater system is underway, with the goal of applying for a Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP) grant in late June or early July to fund a complete overhaul, a project estimated to cost between two and two-and-a-half million dollars. SIDC also assisted in securing a seventeen-million-dollar congressional direct spending bill for the wastewater treatment plant at Westgate. Other initiatives mentioned were owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs, Brownfield site cleanup efforts, regional traffic counting services, and a potential new regional agricultural economic development strategy. Discussion ensued regarding the historic John Street property in Loogootee. Bobbie Abel reported that the property has been cleaned out, a window shored up, and a hole in the roof covered, with the next step being to obtain contractor estimates.

RE: INDIANA UPLANDS REGIONAL LAND BANK UPDATE

Mr. Jones continued with an update on the Indiana Uplands Regional Land Bank, which he noted is the only multi-county regional land bank in Indiana. In its two and a half years of existence, the land bank has acquired twenty properties after researching over four thousand. Notable projects include the cleanup of the Hartsburg gas station near the Town of Crane, where the State invested $167,000 for petroleum cleanup, and a project in Washington, Indiana, to clean a ten-acre site with the potential for two hundred new homes. Mr. Jones explained the land bank's model focuses on returning properties to the tax rolls and hiring local contractors. The current assessed value of acquired properties is approximately $564,000, with an estimated post-renovation value of $3.6 million. He stated that the land bank's grant funding is set to expire in September and formally requested an annual contribution of $50,000 from each member county to provide necessary operational capital and leverage additional grant opportunities.

RE: MUNICIPAL UNIT STRATEGIC TASK FORCE (MUST)

Loogootee Clerk-Treasurer Lori Carrico addressed the Council regarding significant changes to the Local Income Tax (LIT) distribution, now set to take effect in 2028. She explained that under the new legislation, cities with populations over 3,500 will be able to establish their own LIT rates, while smaller municipalities like Loogootee, Crane, and Shoals will remain dependent on the county's rate. Ms. Carrico expressed concern that these changes could be detrimental to smaller municipalities. She explained that a statute was created encouraging the formation of a "Municipal Unit Strategic Task Force" (MUST) in each county to bring together county and municipal officials to discuss the impending LIT changes before the October 1, 2026, reporting deadline to the Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF). The goal is to open a non-binding dialogue to understand each entity's position. Ms. Carrico requested the Council place this matter on its radar for future action. The Council agreed to keep the matter under consideration.

RE: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS

Auditor Michelle Norris presented an additional appropriation request for the Veteran Service Donation Fund (Fund 4107). She explained this fund was created this year to manage donations for veterans' events. This appropriation would establish a supply line item to purchase items and cover expenses for the Veteran Appreciation Day to be held at the Hindostan Falls Shelter house on June 13th. A motion was made by Monty Gregory to approve the additional appropriation for Fund 4107 in the amount of $2,000, seconded by Jim Woody. All in favor, motion passed.

VETERANS SERVICE DONATION FUND – FUND 4107		
4107.000.2000.11	Supplies	$2,000

Auditor Norris presented a request from the Sheriff's Department for the LIT Public Safety Share Fund (Fund 1170) for $40,000 for jail medical expenses. Monty Gregory stated he spoke to the Sheriff today and was told there were approximately $7,000 of 2025 expenses paid out of the 2026 budget. The budget was also depleted due to significant, unbudgeted costs from judge-ordered psychological hospitalizations and other medical bills. After discussion, Jim Hamby made a motion to approve an appropriation of $25,000. The motion was seconded by Gerald Montgomery and passed unanimously. The second request was for an appropriation of $6,709 to replenish the QCC (Quality Correctional Care) contract line in the General Fund Jail budget to cover a medical bill which has already been paid. Jordan Berry made a motion to approve the $6,709 appropriation. The motion was seconded by Monty Gregory and passed unanimously.

LIT PUBLIC SAFETY SHARE- Fund 1170		
1170.000.3000.14	Jail-Medical	$40,000 requested
GENERAL FUND- FUND 1000		$25,000 approved
Jail		
1000.380.3000.28	QCC Contract	$6,709

Auditor Norris presented an additional appropriation request of $125,000 from the TIF Capital Project Westgate Fund (Fund 4500) for the Shoals Housing Project. President Albright clarified this is a loan to the project, combined with a $100,000 grant the Land Bank obtained, to finance the construction of a new, affordable home on Maple Street in Shoals. Upon sale of the home, the Redevelopment Commission will be repaid and the profits will be split between the Land Bank and the Redevelopment Commission. Jim Hamby made a motion to approve the appropriation. The motion was seconded by Jim Woody and passed unanimously.

TIF CAPITAL PROJECT -WG- FUND 4500		
4500.000.3000.17	Building Project	$125,000

Auditor Norris requested an appropriation of $200 from the Opioid Unrestricted Fund (Fund 1238). This is to reimburse the highway department for an employee's time providing last-minute transportation for a veteran to an appointment in Indianapolis. A motion was made by Monty Gregory to approve the appropriation. The motion was seconded by Gerald Montgomery and passed unanimously.

OPIOID UNRESTRICTED FUND- Fund 1238

1238.000.1000.11	Veterans Service	$200

Auditor Norris requested an appropriation from the Auditor's Ineligible Deductions Fund (Fund 1216) to hire an intern to assist with a backlog of scanning and shredding. The amounts requested were $5,600 for wages and $450 for FICA taxes. Gerald Montgomery made a motion to approve the appropriation. The motion was seconded by Monty Gregory and passed unanimously.

AUDITORS INELIGIBLE DEDUCTIONS- FUND 1216

1216.000.1000.12	FICA	$450
1216.000.1000.14	Intern	$5,600
TOTAL FOR AUDITORS INELIGIBLE DEDUCTIONS		**$6,050**

Auditor Norris presented an additional appropriation to establish the budget for the new Wheel and Excise Surtax Fund (Fund 4977) and a subsequent transfer request on behalf of the Highway Department. She reminded the Council they had requested a separate fund for the county's portion of the wheel tax revenue, which has accumulated approximately $150,000 in the first quarter. Auditor Norris explained she had to advertise the proposed budget amounts and had used figures from the restricted highway fund as a template. After review of the request, the Highway Department requested a Council approved transfer of $200,000 from the Local Match to stone and bituminous lines, $100,000 each. Monty Gregory made a motion to approve the budget appropriation for $668,000 and the subsequent transfer request. The motion was seconded by Jim Woody and passed unanimously. The end result is as follows:

WHEEL AND EXCISE SURTAX FUND- FUND 4977

4977.531.2000.11	Stone	$175,000
4977.531.2000.12	Culverts	$20,000
4977.531.2000.13	Bituminous	$160,000
4977.531.2000.14	Concrete	$5,000
4977.531.2000.16	Road Signs	$5,000
4977.531.3000.17	Local Match	$303,000
TOTAL FOR WHEEL AND EXCISE SURTAX FUND		**$668,000**

An appropriation of $4,732 was requested from Fund 4002 for equipment maintenance for the Ambulance Department. Jordan Berry made a motion to approve the appropriation. Monty Gregory seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

AMBULANCE SERVICE FUND- FUND 4002

4002.000.3000.21	Equipment Maintenance	$4,732

RE: ASSESSOR FUND TRANSFER REQUEST

Assessor Carolyn McGuire presented a transfer request for the Reassessment Fund (1224), explaining she needed to cover expected shortfalls in four accounts. Monty Gregory made a motion to approve the transfer request as presented. Jim Hamby seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Transfer Request- Reassessment

From: 1224.115.4000.14	GIS System	$8,000
To: 1224.115.2000.11	Office Supply	$2,000
1224.115.2000.12	Operating Supply	$2,000
1224.115.3000.17	Printing & Advertising	$2,000
1224.115.3000.19	Postage	$2,000

RE: SALARY AND WAGE ORDINANCE 2026-18

Auditor Norris presented salary and wage ordinance amendment 2026-18 to the Council for consideration. The changes included adding "Part-time Drivers" in Fund 1236 to match the budget; correcting a typographical fund number error for Juvenile Community Corrections as the original listed fund 9123 as running from January to June and 9131 as running from July to December but the correct run dates are 9131 Jan to June and 9123 July to December; changing "Patrol Deputy" to "Patrol Deputies" in Fund 8118; and adding an "Intern" position at $10.00 per hour to Fund 1216. A motion was made by Jim Hamby to approve the salary and wage ordinance amendments, 2026-18. The motion was seconded by Sheri Bowling and passed unanimously.

RE: AJOURNMENT

With no further business, a motion was made by Jim Woody to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Jordan Berry. All in favor, motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:41 PM. The next regular meeting of the Martin County Council is scheduled for June 1, 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