

COUNTY COUNCIL

March 12, 2026

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The Parke County Council convened in a regular meeting on Thursday, March 12th, 2026 to consider additional requests in excess of the budget allowed for 2026, and to conduct such other business as may be properly brought before the Council.
- II. **ROLL CALL:** Council members present were Roy Wrightsman, President; Thomas Rohr, Vice President; Jack B. Butler; Matt Helderman; Rick Patton; Jim Howard; Mary Alice Gregg; Susan Kramer, Auditor and Leanna Collisi, Deputy Auditor. Also, present were Katie Potter, Jacob King, Jason Frazier, Jim Meece, Stacie Amerman, Lisa Wood, Chris Newcomb and Mandy Washburn-Adams.
- III. **READING OF THE MINUTES:** Minutes for the Council Meeting held on February 12th, 2026 were presented. Jack B Butler made a motion to approve the February 12th, 2025 minutes as presented. Matt Helderman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
- IV. **ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION REQUESTS:** The Council considered additional appropriation requests as published on Gateway February 26th, 2026.

Council President, Roy Wrightsman, reviewed the appropriations from written requests submitted by Auditor, Susan Kramer. Thus, the following ordinance was adopted: WHEREAS: it has been determined it is now necessary to appropriate more money than was appropriated in the annual budget for 2026, BE IT ORDAINED, by the County Council of Parke County, Indiana, for the expenses of said County government, the following additional sums of money are hereby appropriated and ordered set out of the funds herein specified, subject to the law governing the same: Tom Rohr made a motion to approve the additional appropriation requests as published on Gateway February 26th, 2026 with the amendment to lower the General Fund Professional Services line to \$90,127.00 from \$100,000.00. The motion was seconded by Jack B Butler and it carried unanimously.

PROBLEM SOLVING COURT PRG

Professional Services	2450-000-0003-5387	500.00	500.00
Total PROBLEM-SOLVING COURT PRG	Total	500.00	500.00

GENERAL FUND COUNCIL

Professional Services	1000-041-0003-5387	90,127.00	90,127.00
Total GENERAL FUND COUNCIL	Total	90,127.00	90,127.00

PUBLIC SAFETY FUND

Building & Grounds	1170-000-0004-5072	84,949.00	84,949.00
Total PUBLIC SAFETY FUND	Total	84,949.00	84,949.00

OPIOID RESTRICTED

Professional Services	1237-000-0003-5387	17,000.00	17,000.00
Total OPIOID RESTRICTED	Total	17,000.00	17,000.00

- V. **JURY PAY:** The Auditor presented the Parke County Clerk's Certification of jury fees collected for February 2026, and requested \$314.38 be transferred into the Jury Pay Fund, pursuant to IC 33-19-8-8. Rick Patton made the motion to direct the Auditor to transfer the jury fees collected in the amount of

\$314.38 from the County Users Fund to the Jury Fee Fund. The motion was seconded by Matt Helderman and unanimously carried.

VI. REAPPROPRIATIONS: None presented

VII. TRANSFER OF FUNDS: None presented

VIII. GENERAL BUSINESS:

AIC District Meeting April 9th, 2026 The Inn at DePauw 5:30pm – 8:00pm – Please notify the Auditor if you would like to attend.

Gate Fee Bill did not pass this year.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Redevelopment Commission (RDC): Nine Developers took tours of the Bank Building, BOT proposals are due by noon on March 20th, 2026. Construction slated to start mid to late August 2026. Decision will be made whether to use financing through BOT or seeking finances elsewhere. Drive thru demolition should be completed by the end of the month, weather permitting. Back parking lot is owned by the RDC from Market St to Jefferson St except for one spot allocated to the Inkwel.

Courthouse Security Committee: Did not meet.

Planning and Zoning Board: One zoning change from residential to commercial near Bellmore.

West Central Solid Waste District (SWD): Did not meet.

Northern Parke Regional Sewer District: First phase in progress, Turkey Run still interested but will likely in the second phase.

X. DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

- **Susan Kramer, Auditor:**
 - The Auditor's Cash Flow Statement was submitted for review by the Council Members.

- **Katie Potter, Assessor:**
 - Ratio Study was submitted on March 2nd, 2026 meeting the deadline.
 - DLGF made changes to the Cost Table which will affect all taxpayers. Katie Potter drafted a letter to be sent to all taxpayer to help explain the new changes:

April 27, 2026

To: All Parke County Taxpayers

It is once again Form 11 (Notice of Assessment) mailing season and, as with every year there are changes that affect your assessment. This year is particularly concerning to me as your County Assessor. The Department of

Local Government Finance (DLGF), who is our oversight department at the state level, has released new cost tables. The cost tables are the base for your assessment. They were last updated four years ago and, as we all know, most everything has risen in cost in the past four years. Building materials are no different! Thus, there is a significant increase in the base cost tables. The DLGF will update the cost tables every two years now to help alleviate such large changes. On the years that they don't adjust the cost tables they will be updating the VEM (Verified Economic Modifier). The upside to this being done is there should not be such a wide swing but, if costs go down, they will also be realized much quicker. Just because your assessment has increased does not equate to your taxes raising at the same rate. Please keep this in mind. I, as a taxpayer, am also concerned about the raise in assessment and the uncertainty of a possible tax increase.

My office is here to assist you with any questions or concerns that you might have regarding your assessment. Just know that we have no control over the cost table increases. The assessment is broken down between land and improvements (structures). The number you should be concerned with is the total. On residential parcels and commercial parcels, it should be close to the value that you would sell your property for on the open market. Agricultural land is handled differently per legislation.

There are several deductions available to taxpayers such as the Homestead Deduction, Age Deduction, Disabled Veteran's Deduction and more. For questions regarding your deductions, you may contact the Auditor's Office at 765-569-3422. These deductions will also be listed on the TS-1 (the form included with your tax bill). They should be listed on the lower right-hand portion of the TS-1. If you think you should have a deduction that is not listed on your TS-1 you may speak with the Auditor's Office to rectify those issues. However, due to legislation, the Geothermal Deduction and the Solar Deduction are no longer being given. There is no need to call the Auditor's Office regarding these two deductions when you notice that they have been removed.

Again, please feel free to contact my office with any questions or concerns regarding your assessment. We are here to serve you and to help you understand your assessment.

Regards,

Katie Potter
Parke County Assessor

- **Chris Newcomb, Park & Rec Director:**
 - Met with the Conservancy board regarding the lily pad issue at Rockville Lake Park, they are disputing the fact that the lily pads are an issue that could cause flooding. The cost to have the lily pads removed will be \$37,900.00 and the Conservancy is requesting that Parke County pay half of the cost.
 - Chris will be getting his Category 5 license to spray herbicides to make sure that the lily pads and other non-wanted vegetation will be eliminated and maintained.
 - Copper was stolen from the shelter houses and a few minor water leaks to report.

- **Jim Meece, Commissioner:**
 - Highway department is out patching as weather permits.
 - Milestone is ready to start paving Fisher Road.
 - Phillips Bridge roof has been re-done; Neet and Mecca Bridges will be completed next. CVC is funding the reroofing projects.

- **Jason Frazier, Sheriff:**
 - Nothing to report.
- **Hamilton Center:**
 - Introduction of Joshua Reed, Executive Director of Public Affairs and Josh Alsop.

XI. NEW BUSINESS:

- Resolution 2026-03 Appropriation of Funds to Volunteer Fire Departments.

**PARKE COUNTY
RESOLUTION 2026-03
APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS TO VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS
PARTICIPATING IN FIRST RESPONDER ACTIVITIES**

WHEREAS, the Indiana law provides that powers not specifically reserved for the State are delegated to the local government and may be regulated by a municipality [Home Rule], as delineated in I.C. 36-1-3; and

WHEREAS, the Council is empowered with the duty to appropriate funds received and expended for County purposes; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF PARKE COUNTY, INDIANA, AS FOLLOWS:

- A. The Parke County Council appropriates and approves the expenditure of funds from the General Fund to Volunteer Fire Departments that engage in first responder activities in Parke County.
- B. The Parke County Council will appropriate an amount equal to the amount of funds returned to the County from the Convention and Visitors Commission (“CVC”) as required by Ordinance 2025-04 and the accompanying MOU between Parke County and the CVC resulting from the increase in Parke County Innkeepers Tax.
- C. The money in the fund shall be distributed to any local fire departments that engage in first responder runs. The number of first responder runs made in the preceding three (3) years will be provided by the Parke County EMA, with runs to State owned property or buildings counted twice. Each fire department providing first responder services shall be assigned a percentage based upon the total number of first responder runs for the preceding three (3) years and the fire department shall receive their proportionate share of the monies collected in the fund. Any fire department that discontinues providing first responder services shall be ineligible to receive money from the fund. Monies collected in the fund shall be distributed pursuant to the formula the ensuing calendar year.
- D. If, after the effective date of this resolution, state statute requires the mandatory distribution of Public Safety Local Income Tax (PSLIT), or any other income tax source to fire departments or entities not currently required to receive such funds, the Parke County Council may alter, amend, or repeal this

resolution, in conformity with Indiana law, to reallocate the distribution of funds to effectuate the purposes herein.

Duly adopted on the 12th day of March, 2026.

Jack B Butler made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-03 as presented by Roy Wrightsman. Tom Rohr seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

- Letter drafted by Roy Wrightsman, President to be sent to all Volunteer Fire Departments along with the Departmental breakdown as well as payment of the revenue distributions for 2026.

March 12, 2026

To the Parke County Volunteer Fire Departments,

Today, the Parke County Council approved a one-time distribution of \$90,126.76 to volunteer fire departments in the county that provide first responder services. On behalf of the Council, I want to extend our sincere thanks to each of you for your dedication and invaluable service to our community.

These funds stem from legislation passed by the Indiana General Assembly in its 2023 session, which allowed Parke County to increase the innkeepers tax rate from 5% to 8%. We are especially grateful to **State Senator Spencer Deery**, who championed this legislation on behalf of Parke County residents. This increase has allowed the council to shift some tourism expenses from the general fund to this new revenue stream. The resulting savings is being distributed to the volunteer fire departments as we have done the last few years.

Further, the council codified this practice by adopting resolution 2026-03, outlining the process by which these funds will be distributed going forward. It is our intention that we will continue this practice, but I do caution that this is not a given and should circumstances change, we may have to change with them.

We continue to work with the general assembly to find a reasonable resolution to compensating first responders for serving in the state parks. This year's bill failed again in the legislature, but our senator, Spencer Deery, as well as our representative, Tim Yocum, are committed to working on this during the summer to find a mechanism that will be acceptable.

In closing, the council deeply appreciates the work done by each of our volunteer fire departments. You are a very important part of our community.

With gratitude and continued determination,

Roy Wrightsman
President, Parke County Council

- Revenue distribution for 2026.

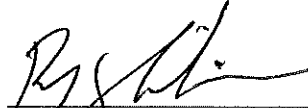
Department	Total Runs	Percentage	Total Revenue
Bellmore	834	19.15%	\$17,259.56
Bloomingtondale	360	8.82%	\$7,949.50
Bridgeton	200	4.31%	\$3,887.29
Lyford	394	8.50%	\$7,657.96
Marshall	619	15.51%	\$13,974.80
Mecca	265	5.71%	\$5,150.66
Montezuma	392	8.52%	\$7,677.39
Rockville	1004	21.98%	\$19,805.73
Rosedale	348	7.50%	\$6,763.88
Total	4416	100.00%	\$90,126.77

- Auditor's Office will be mailing payment and all accompanying documentation this afternoon.

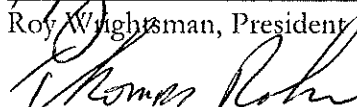
XII. OLD BUSINESS: None Presented

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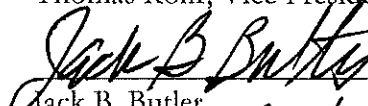
NAY



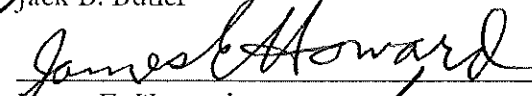
 Roy Wrightsman, President



 Thomas Rohr, Vice President



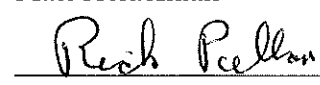
 Jack B. Butler



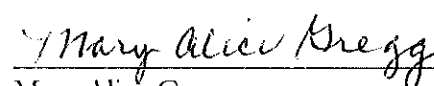
 James E. Howard



 Matt Helderman

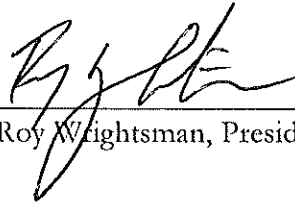


 Rick Patton



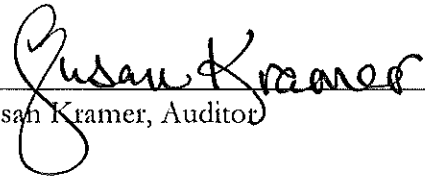
 Mary Alice Gregg

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business to come before the Council, the motion to adjourn was made by Jack B Butler. The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.



Roy Wightsman, President

ATTEST:



Susan Kramer, Auditor