

Regular March Meeting Minutes March 3, 2026

Present: President Terry Richey, Vice President Jason Hillenburg, Members, Chad Wilson, Jamy Greathouse, Mark Hillenburg, Clerk Treasurer Danieta Foster and Atty Matthew Lorenzo

President Terry Richey opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Hearings

President Terry Richey opened a formal public hearing on a proposed water rate increase Ross Hagen of Bakertilly gave a detailed financial presentation

The water study assessed both current operations and future project scenarios; the council's present focus is stabilizing current operations. Annual revenue requirements for water are about \$700,000, while current receipts are about \$462,000, creating an approximate \$240,000 shortfall. Addressing this necessitates a roughly 52% increase in water rates. For an average 4,000-gallon monthly bill (currently about \$36), this would be about an \$18-\$18.50 increase; however, most customers use less than 4,000 gallons, so typical bills will likely rise by about \$10. Hagen contextualized that comparable communities statewide reported an average water bill of \$44.21 in 2024 and "probably a little over \$45" today, placing the town's current \$36 rate below the state average.

Council members and speakers emphasized the prolonged period since the last water rate increase (April 2019) and the compounding effects of inflation—roughly 3.5% annually in normal years and as high as 13–21% during COVID—costs that were absorbed without rate adjustments.

The council entertained questions and comments from the public, both in person and online.

The public hearing concerning a water rate increase was adjourned. Motion: Jamy Greathouse, 2nd:Chad Wilson Carried: 5-0.

President Terry Richey then opened a formal public hearing on a proposed sewer rate increase. Ross Hagen continued the financial presentation.

The town faces approximately \$950,000 in annual costs and is currently generating about \$835,000, leaving an estimated \$114,000 shortfall. To close this gap, Baker Tilly advised a rate increase just under 14% for a typical 4,000-gallon monthly bill, equating to about a \$10.45 increase. Hagen noted that the town's sewer rates—currently about \$76 per month—are higher than the state average (about \$56 in 2024 and close to \$60 today), a pattern common among CSO (Combined Sewer Overflow) communities due to the substantial costs of compliance and infrastructure replacement.

The council also discussed stormwater management. Stormwater and sewer were distinguished (stormwater from roads and hard surfaces; sewer through drains). The stormwater fee remains \$3 per household—never increased—and is intended to fund projects that keep stormwater out of the sewer system, aligning with CSO objectives. Speakers noted that \$3 is likely insufficient compared to typical \$6 fees, and some communities between \$13 and \$23. The town aims to continue separating stormwater, with the Preston Street bridge project cited as a key step to improve drainage and reduce system load.

Throughout, council members acknowledged the difficulty of raising rates while underscoring the necessity to remain solvent and meet mandated infrastructure requirements. They affirmed commitment to maintaining local control of utilities, citing community pride and the scale of recent investments.

Council entertained questions and comments from the public, both online, and in person.

The public hearing was Adjourned. Motion: Jamy Greathouse 2nd: Chad Wilson

Carries: 5-0.

Regular Business & New Residential Development

The agenda was amended to add Bridge Construction as item a. in new and continued business, to move each item down one and add personnel as the last item. Motion: Jamy Greathouse

2nd: Chad Wilson Carries 5-0.

Agenda approved as amended. Motion: Jamy Greathouse 2nd: Mark Wilkerson Carries: 5-0.

Claims approved. Motion: Jason Hillenburg 2nd: Chad Wilson Carries: 5-0.

Allowance Docket approved. Motion: Jamy Greathouse 2nd: Jason Hillenburg Carries: 5-0.

No spending requests.

The council reviewed “Bridge Estates,” a 40-lot subdivision on Bethany Road (1025 County Road), with the new internal street named Annie Avenue. The developer reported robust pre-sales—19 lots already sold—and emphasized quality standards intended to exceed current town ordinances. Requirements include a minimum of 1,200 square feet per home, a one-car garage, 10-foot side setbacks, and a planned 25-foot utility easement from with water on one side and sewer on the other.

Infrastructure details were presented: a 26-foot roadway with 12-inch roll curbs, storm drains integrated into the curbs, and a 50-foot entrance. Road construction specifications include a nine-inch base, a three-inch asphalt layer, and an inch-and-a-half top course, targeting streets that are “four and a half on finish.” The plan includes two engineered retention ponds designed to contain stormwater on-site and avoid discharge to existing ditches. The developer awaits engineering

water runoff calculations to confirm pond sizing for a ten-year window and is coordinating with REMC to finalize electric line routing.

Council members highlighted the subdivision's locational advantage—about three minutes from the interstate—predicting it will attract buyers from nearby towns due to the price point. Homes are expected to be around \$220,000. No further action taken

The council also approved an exception to ordinance for Drew Royalty to build two additional houses at 106 North Bethany Road with the property being split to have 55 ft road frontage. Motion: Chad Wilson 2nd: Mark Wilkerson Carries: 5-0.

Approved reappointment of Jay Lawrence to the Parks Board, for a term of 4 years, 2026-2030. Motion: Chad Wilson 2nd: Mark Wilkerson Carries 5-0.

Municipal Financial and Tax District Resolution

Approved Resolution 2026-2, A Resolution of the Crothersville Town Council Approving the Declaratory Resolution Removing Certain Residential Properties from the Crothersville EDA. Motion: Jamy Greathouse 2nd: Mark Wilkerson Carries:5-0.

Approved Resolution 2026-3, A Resolution of the Crothersville Town Council Approving the Declaratory Resolution Removing Certain Decremental Real Property Parcels From the Town EDA. Motion: Jamy Greathouse 2nd: Mark Wilkerson Carries 5-0.

Approved Resolution 2026-4, A Resolution of the Crothersville Town Council Approving the Declaratory Resolution Removing a Certain Decremental Personal Property Parcel from the Crothersville EDA. Motion: Jamy Greathouse 2nd: Mark Wilkerson Carries 5-0.

Approved a proposal from Reedy Financial Services for planning and budgeting support at a cost of \$2400 a year billed at \$2000.00 monthly. Motion: Jamy Greathouse 2nd: Jason Hillenburg Carries: 5-0.

Approved Pay App 8 to McGuire Iron, for the water project; in the amount of \$37,800.00. Motion: Jamy Greathouse 2nd: Chad Wilson Carries 5-0.

Approved First Internet Bank's bid for water bond anticipation notes at a 4.875% interest rate, slightly better than the 5% estimated in the rate study. The bank's legal counsel fee is \$3,500, and ongoing reporting is minimal (annually while notes are outstanding). First Internet Bank is a major participant in the bond anticipation market, handling about 50–65% of such notes. Closing is scheduled for March 17th for just under \$1.3 million, intended to cover remaining phase one costs and primarily design engineering for phase two, with an allowance for ordering materials. Motion: Jamy Greathouse 2nd: Jason Hillenburg Carries: 5-0.

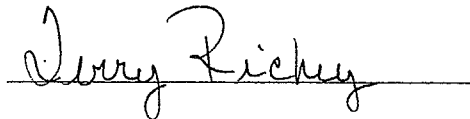
Approved Ordinance 2026-2, An Ordinance Amending the Rates and Charges for the Waterworks Utility. Motion: Jamy Greathouse 2nd: Chad Wilson Carries: 5-0.

Approved Ordinance 2026-3, An Ordinance Amending the Rates and Charges for the Water Works Utility. Motion: Jamy Greathouse 2nd: Chad Wilson Carries: 5-0

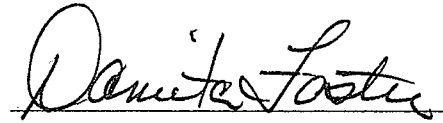
Personnel Action

A significant personnel action was taken: the council approved a motion for a 30-day suspension without pay for Chief of Police Matt Browning, effective immediately. Jonathan Tabor was appointed acting chief during the suspension. Motion: Jamy Greathouse 2nd: Chad Wilson Carries: 5-0.

Adjournment. Motion: Jamy Greathouse 2nd: Chad Wilson Carries: 5-0.



Terry Richey, President



Danieta Foster, Clerk Treasurer