

FAYETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting –August 4, 2026

BE IT REMEMBERED:

That the Fayette County Commissioners of Fayette County, State of Indiana, met in regular scheduled session on the above date at 2:00 P.M. with the following present: Commissioners Dale Munson, Tracie Bever, and Dale Strong, and Auditor Jane Downard and County Attorney Geoff Wesling of said County and State.

Commissioner Munson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Strong moved to approve the minutes of July 21st regular meeting and the July 24th special session, Commissioner Bever seconded the motion, and motion carried 3-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

Gary Smith, the Chair of the Fayette County Public Defender Board, was present. In 1993, the Public Defender Board was created so the county could be reimbursed up to 40% of indigent criminal cases using pauper attorneys. Gary explained the difficulty in finding attorneys to accept the contracts and meeting the case load requirements of the state. We have to provide indigent defense, so we have to provide pauper attorneys. The two most recent contracts were to an attorney in North Vernon and one in Jennings County, and he does not believe either of those contracts will stay active for very long given the travel distance and time involved. Gary would like to address council at budget hearing time and would like the support of commissioners when he asks them to consider creating a public defender department.

DEPARTMENT HEADS:

ASSESSOR:

Jeff Coleman had submitted a 144 request to hire Bobbie Tevis as a full-time 2nd Deputy. Commissioner Bever moved to approve the 144 request as presented, Commissioner Strong seconded the motion, and motion carried 3-0.

AUDITOR:

Jane Downard presented a 144 to hire Savannah Bates as a part-time employee. Commissioner Strong moved to approve the 144 request as presented, Commissioner Bever seconded the motion, and motion carried 3-0.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:

Wade Walling requested signatures for the updated county maps. He shared that the Fayette Community Foundation awarded EMA a \$75,000 grant.

AREA PLAN COMMISSION:

Bill MacDaniel discussed an agreement he had emailed to commissioners to hire a consultant that is experienced in drafting ordinances for AI Data Centers. He shared that he will be going before council in September to request additional appropriations to hire his successor prior to year end so there could be a training and transition period.

COUNTY ATTORNEY:

Geoff Wesling did not have anything at this time.

COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE:

Connie Durham and Kay Riker-Peyton were present. Connie was present as both a council member and a resident. She said after watching the last commissioner meeting, she was concerned about the awarding of a \$40,000 bid to improve the existing dog building. She was part of the Humane Society that donated almost \$20,000 that was put into a building fund. She mentioned that it was posted on Facebook that the Animal Shelter had recently received a pretty significant donation and she had hoped it would be put into that building fund and used as match money for any possible grants. She would like commissioners to hold off on renovating the current shelter building and get the community behind it with more donations. She also said she would like to see some reports from the Animal Shelter.

MAIL:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

Dossan with Kleinpeter Consulting presented contracts for the properties that had already been approved and bids accepted, and those were signed. Commissioner Strong moved to approve the acceptance of the OOR Contractor bids, Commissioner Bever seconded the motion, and motion carried 3-0. Commissioner Strong said he was aware of two homes needing roof repair that we were unable to get contractors, and Dossan said he would make a note to discuss it and follow up.

The service contract with Keitha Miller, who handles our Public Defender Board quarterly reporting, was presented for consideration for a pay increase. Commissioner Bever moved to approve renewing the contract at an increased rate of \$10,000 per year, Commissioner Strong seconded the motion, and motion carried 3-0.

PATRON CONCERNS:

None

PAYROLL AND CLAIMS:

Commissioner Strong moved to approve claims as presented, seconded by Commissioner Bever, and motion carried 3-0. Commissioners then signed all paperwork on camera.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Strong moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Bever, and motion carried 3-0. Meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

Dale Munson, President

Dale H. Strong
Dale Strong

Tracie Bever, Vice-President

Jane E. Downard
Attest: Jane Downard, Auditor