

## JENNINGS COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

April 14, 2026 @ 6:00 p.m.

Annex Building

Tina Ellis, Mike Gerth, Gene Rudicel, Jerry Lamb, Dave Woodall, and Dave Cheatham were present. Tina opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Dave C. followed with prayer.

Jerry made a motion to approve prior meeting minutes; Mike seconded the motion. One correction needs to be made to add Dave W. to the attendance.

The treasurer's report shows that Indiana Trust has earned \$84,827.59. The counties bank account through German American earned \$5,544.77 in interest which was transferred to Indiana Trust. Mike would like to let Tina know that she is doing a really good job!

The CF-1 tax abatement compliance report (presented by Kathy) was accepted by motion. Dave W. motioned to accept. Gene seconded the motion, passed unanimously. The report showed job numbers and wage metrics exceeding expectations and generated a routine vote to accept rather than a contested approval. Departmental compliance reporting was framed as beneficial for local workforce outcomes.

Marie with APC is asking the council to approve her part-time person \$21.65 per hour instead of \$18.00. Tonja worked for the county and had years of experience. Tonja retired but agreed to come back part time. The distribution that pays Tonja is a full-time position and is budgeted for \$39,000.00. Dave W. said it was left in the budget just in case she needed a full-time person instead of a part-time position. Dave W. said he doesn't have a problem paying \$21.65 per hour because of her experience. Confusion over multiple versions of the salary ordinance—some unsigned or undated. Several speakers argued the county must circulate the final signed ordinance to every department immediately to avoid inconsistent pay decisions and unauthorized expenditures. The auditor's office and department heads repeatedly requested a definitive, signed document. Dave W. made a motion to approve \$21.65. Dave C. seconds the motion, passed 5-1 vote. Jerry Lamb voted against it because he said that rules are made and no one sticks by them. The salary ordinance is not dated and not signed. The signature lines are not on the document. The question was asked if the approval for \$21.65 was going to be back paid and Marie said that she was paid that wage. Tina asked how it was paid if council had not approved of it yet? Mike said that the money and the position were there. Dave W. also states that the money is there and she will be paid out of the same distribution line. Tina says that the permission wasn't there, and Marie said she got permission from the commissioners to hire her. Tina says that there was no spending authority.

The risk management renewal with IPMG (work-comp and liability policy work) was discussed thoroughly; the renewal cost for the upcoming year was confirmed at \$21,674 after correcting an initial document mismatch. Advocates argued custom policies and training will reduce the county's experience modification factor and produce long-term premium savings. Several council members asked for clearer quantified savings before recurring commitments. Mike made a motion to approve \$21,674 to be paid out of Safety Lit, Gene seconded the motion, passed by a vote of 5, Jerry Lamb voted against it. He said that a lot of money is being spent and no one knows what is going on.

Cody came to council to discuss Go Bond. He went to the commissioners and asked for \$377,000.00. The commissioners approved it but there isn't that much remaining in the bond. General jail maintenance is \$50,000 and Cody says that this was requested every year. Tina said that she had been working with Cody for the last 6 weeks and had told Cody that the funds were available. Amy called commissioners and said that there was only \$348,000.00 remaining in the Go Bond. Dave W. said that there is \$863,000 still in the Go Bond. Cody said that he was willing to add all these items to his budget. Tina said that everything that was turned in on Capital request forms should have been in the bond. Dave W. said that there isn't enough money in the bond to do that. Dave W. said that the money can come out of safety lit.

Charlie St. John comes to the council to discuss salaries for the secretaries at the Highway Dept. Charlie says currently one position pays \$24.26 per hour and the other position pays \$20.60 per hour. Charlie would like to change the hourly rate for one position to \$23.00 per hour and the other to \$21.00. The reason for this is the employee currently at the highway has years of service and the other position is a new hire for the county. Both positions will be equal in duties. Gene made a motion to allow the changes in hourly amounts, Dave C. seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

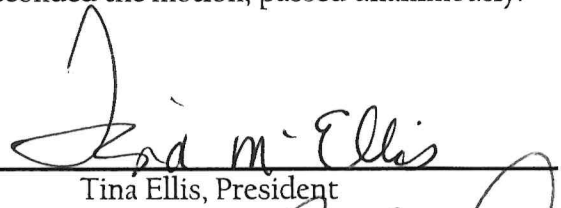
Gene made a motion to approve Jonathon Garret for the park board appointment, per the board's recommendation. Dave W. seconded the motion, passing unanimously.

Dave W. made a motion for the council to approve a study committee. Gene seconds the motion, passed unanimously.

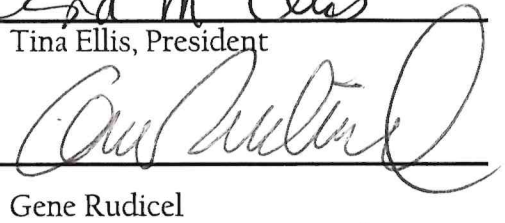
Mike made a motion to approve \$12812.90 to be paid to Reedy Financial. Dave W. seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

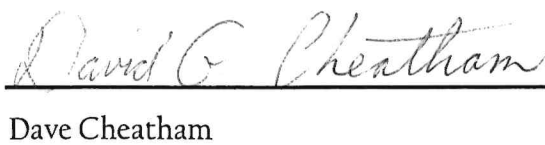
Dave C. made a motion to adjourn at 7:37 pm, Gene seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

  
Sarah Abel, Auditor

  
Tina Ellis, President

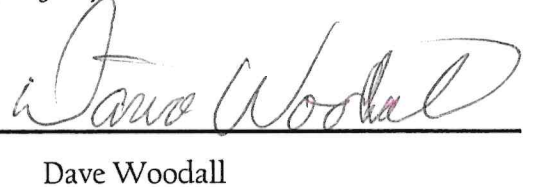
  
Mike Gerth, Vice President

  
Gene Rudicel

  
Dave Cheatham

  
Jerry Lamb

Mandy Creech

  
Dave Woodall