

**Gibson County Council
Regular Session Meeting
May 13, 2025**

The Gibson County Council met in Regular Session on May 13, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. at the Southwest Annex Meeting Room.

Members Present: President Jeremy Overton, Vice President, Derek McGraw, Council Members: Jay Riley, Craig Schafer, Robert Schleiter (absent), Michael Stilwell, and Hannah Whitehead
Also present were Auditor Mike Watkins and 1st Deputy to Auditor, Kristy York

The Council opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Approval of Minutes - April 8th meeting minutes were approved as written.

Clerk Report –this report was acknowledged by the Council.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Health Department – Administrator Shade gave Council their monthly reports; there were no questions. She told the Council one of the new programs they are conducting is a walk every Friday morning at Lafayette Park.

Extension Office – Abby Heidenreich, Extension Educator, told Council they have been working toward the fair deadline of May 15th. and they are looking forward to the fair and other summer programs including the farmer’s market trail and the food is medicine program.

Animal Services – Sharon Werne told Council they are almost ready to start construction. The shelter is overcrowded, and they are requesting that residents foster animals. She will continue to request money to pay for the new building’s water/septic installation. They will be holding their animal clinic on June 21st at the Princeton Veterinarian Clinic; you can vaccinate your animal for \$20. You must call to reserve an appointment, so they ensure enough medicine.

Sheriff Department - Chief Ballard gave the staffing update.

OLD BUSINESS

Jail Project –George Ballard, Owners Representative told Council that the new jail was inspected last week, and no violations were found by the state nor the Princeton Fire Department. They are working on moving into the new facility this week. They will be in discussions with Commissioners about them taking over the old jail; even though they plan to remove it very soon.

Contract for County Engineer/Highway Superintendent & Salary Ordinance Amendment –The salary for the new combined position will be \$145,881.60 per year for one position, not two. This will save the county a substantial amount of money by hiring one person, rather than two. The title will be changed to superintendent/engineer. They will leave the old positions on the salary ordinance as a placeholder.

Council Member McGraw made a motion to approve this new combined position and salary ordinance amendment, seconded by Council Member Stilwell. The vote was 6-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Oakland City Public Library Additional Appropriation from Rainy Day Fund for \$75,000 – Library Director Julie Elmore requests an additional appropriation be advertised from the rainy-day fund in the amount of \$75,000 in the other services/charges category. They have a \$350,000 cash balance. Council Member McGraw made a motion to approve advertising this additional appropriation, seconded by Council Member Riley. The vote was 6-0.

Public Safety LIT – Introductory Discussion on Township & Fire Department Allocations – Phylliss Earnst, Patoka Township Trustee introduced Ben Roeger, Associate from C.L. Coonrod & Company. This company specializes in government accounting/budgeting. Patoka Township has been working with Mr. Roeger on the public safety local income tax since the non-municipal fire departments were not included in the distribution amounts in this first year. The new tax started distributing in January 2025 for the county and its municipalities. Mr. Roeger explained to the Council that the public safety tax would require additional council action to approve the townships share of this distribution. The council can approve as much as they want, or they can set the rate of the distribution. The county and its municipalities should receive \$3.9 million in 2025. Mr. Roeger says that hypothetically, if the townships had been approved, they would have received \$568,000. Mr. Roeger and Patoka Township are requesting additional feedback so they can move forward with a request to begin receiving their share of this public safety tax. The hypothetical example presented by Mr. Roeger is based on what Gibson County is currently receiving. The townships request to receive a share of the LIT public safety tax will need to be renewed annually. Councilman Riley asked if there was a way to bypass the annual renewal; Mr. Roeger feels it must be done each year. They are not requesting any action today, they are only seeking feedback, and the townships will apply before the July deadline. The townships submitted letters to the Council in support of the Council taking affirmative action on this matter. The Council must act before the September 1st deadline.

Abby Heidenreich, County Extension Director to Discuss Summer Intern – The Extension Office is seeking permission to hire a summer intern, they have this position in their budget. Council Member Stilwell made a motion to approve the summer intern, seconded by Council Member McGraw. The vote was 6-0.

Judy Adams/Stephanie Young Discuss Creation of a Budget for Soil/Water Conservation District – The Soil/Water District need more than just office supplies; Judy feels it might be best to create a new department for them with their own budget. The council was okay with this, but requested Commissioners keep the lines in their budget in case it is not approved.

Transfer Requests

Fund 1000 General	01 Clerk	from	26000 Office Supplies	
		into	44200 Computers & Equipment	\$393.55
	05 Sheriff (T#4)	from	11312 Captain (2)	
		into	12605 Patrol Officers (9)	\$37,400
	104 Election Expense	from	11415 Poll Workers-Primary	\$21,760
		from	11513 Poll Workers-Gen	\$ 3,240
		into	44200 Computers & Equipment	\$25,000
	104 Election Expense	from	30503 Printing Ballots	
		into	42200 Election Equipment	\$14,058
	301 EMS	from	11113 Supervisor	
		into	11108 Asst Director of Admin	\$11,162.40
		from	11113 Supervisor	
		into	11110 Asst Director of Oper	\$11,162.40
		from	11113 Supervisor	
		into	11309 Chief Medical Office	\$26,547.20

Council Member Riley made a motion to approve all transfer requests, seconded by Council Member Stilwell. The vote was 6-0.

Additional Appropriation Requests to Advertise

General Fund 1000; Public Defender	10000 Personal Services	\$106,319
Fund 1222 Statewide 9-1-1	10000 Personal Services	\$ 40,000
Fund 4100 EMA Prepare/Women's Foundation	20000 Supplies	\$ 3,000
	30000 Other Services/Charges	\$ 3,000
Fund 4101 EMS Donation	30000 Other Services/Charges	\$ 1,233
Fund 4011 Sheriff's Fleet Maintenance	20000 Supplies	\$ 20,000
	30000 Other Services/Charges	\$ 10,000

Council Member McGraw made a motion to approve the advertisement of additional appropriations, seconded by Council Member Whitehead. The vote was 6-0.

Additional Appropriation Resolution --

Fund Name: Fund Cumulative Building Fund 1136		
	40000 Capital Outlays	\$308,502
Fund Name: LIT Public Safety Fund 1170		
	40000 Capital Outlays	\$323,615
Fund Name: Riverboat Fund		
	40000 Capital Outlays	\$ 20,000
Fund Name: Veteran's Donation Fund 4110		
	20000 Supplies	\$ 3,400
	30000 Other Services/Charges	\$ 6,000

Council Member Riley made a motion to approve the additional appropriations, seconded by Council Member McGraw. The vote was 6-0.

Sirens -- Councilman Riley asked EMA Director to come forward on this matter. A year ago, there was a quote to repair sirens that was over \$800,000; now it seems the manufacturer will replace 100% of sirens at a cost of \$500,000. To fix one siren only, the cost is \$100,000 plus to fix some other sirens the cost is estimated at approximately \$300,000. All 18 sirens can be replaced with 100% new sirens at a cost of \$500,000. EMA Director McKinney feels they can trade in the old sirens and receive some value, as the manufacturer will sell the refurbished, old sirens to another county. This trade-in will deduct from the cost of the new sirens. The new system will come with a software/hardware upgrade with an auto signal sent from NOAA. The council feels the Public LIT Safety tax can be budgeted for this item. There is a one-time fee for software but no annual fee thereafter. It might take until October to get these sirens. Councilman McGraw motioned to move forward with using LIT Public Safety and EMA working with Attorney Spindler on a bid package for the sirens; seconded from Councilman Riley. The motion passed 6-0.

Larry Michel asked if the council minutes could get updated on the new county website.

Patty Vanoven with Gibson County Chamber of Commerce announced a ribbon cutting at American Family on Friday at 1 p.m.; the YMCA will have an open house/ribbon cutting on May 22nd; and the Log Inn will have a 200-year anniversary celebration on June 6th at 3:30 p.m.

Councilman McGraw motioned to adjourn.

Minutes from the May 13th meeting



Jeremy Overton, President

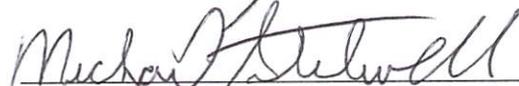
Derek McGraw, Vice- President

Jay Riley, Council Member

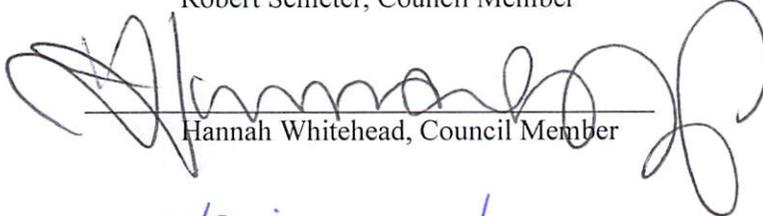


Craig Schafer, Council Member

Robert Schleiter, Council Member



Michael Stilwell, Council Member



Hannah Whitehead, Council Member

Attest: 

Michael A. Watkins, Gibson County Auditor

