

**Gibson County Council  
Regular Session Meeting  
December 16, 2025 at Southwest Annex**

**Council Members Present**

- President Jeremy Overton
- Vice President Derek McGraw
- Council Member Jay Riley
- Council Member Craig Schafer
- Council Member Robert Schleiter
- Council Member Michael Stilwell
- Council Member Hannah Whitehead

Also, present:

- Auditor Mike Watkins
- 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Auditor Kristy York
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputy Auditor Logan Vickers

**Pledge of Allegiance**

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

**Approval of Minutes**

- The Council approved the minutes of November 12<sup>th</sup> regular and December 1<sup>st</sup> special meetings as written.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**Sheriff Department presented by Sheriff Vanoven**

- The 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Commissary Report was presented to Council.
- Deputy positions: Fully staffed.
- Corrections positions: 16 of 21 filled.
- Communications positions: Fully staffed.
- Community Corrections positions: Fully staffed.
- There was an average jail population of 118 inmates.
- A 25-minute in-person holiday visit for sixty inmates was held on Saturday.

**Health Department presented by Administrator Shade**

- 2025 was a good year.
- New program for 2026 titled New Year, New You.
- Follow facebook page for updates.

**EMS (Emergency Medical Services) presented by AJ Aldridge and Arica Cole**

- EMS is fully staffed.

**Highway Department presented by County Engineer Holden**

- Gibson County was awarded a \$1,000,000 Community Corrections Grant, which will fund improvements on Tulip Tree Drive. Out of \$237 million of applications, only \$100 million was awarded. The county plans to submit another high-scoring project next year to remain competitive.

- The federal bridge project near Wheeling Covered Bridge is now open, and a new federal bridge project is scheduled to begin this summer.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Jail Project presented by Owners' Representative, George Ballard**

- Auxiliary parking lot work is complete with striping, lighting, and surveillance.
- Three I Engineering is moving forward planning the teardown of the old jail.
- Project to upgrade radios in Sheriff's Department is moving along.

### **Wheel & Excise Tax Rate Update**

- County Engineer Holden discussed the wheel tax rate.
- No new information to share; no changes are expected in 2026.

### **2026 Redevelopment Spending Plan Introduced by Attorney Jim McDonald**

- No questions or comments.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Hiring Approval for Circuit Court Probation Personnel Vacancy – Judge Meade**

- Council had no questions or comments.

### **Solar Panel Tax Credit for Sheriff's Office – George Ballard**

- Ohio Valley Solar informed George that the federal government is offering tax credits for solar projects.
- Brown, Smith, Settles, a firm from Evansville, will assist with filing for this tax credit on a federal income tax return. They have a \$275 per hour fee that might cost the County \$1,500 in total to file. Auditor Watkins feels the County should investigate this.

### **Project Owners Representative for 1949 & 1989 Jail Demolition**

- Owner's Representative Ballard asked Council to renew his contract (approximately \$6000) into 2026 to oversee this demolition.
- The cost would continue to pay from Fund 1233.

Council Member McGraw motioned to approve the Owner's Representative Contract for 2026, seconded by Council Member Stilwell. The vote was 7-0.

### **2026 Salary Schedule**

- Attorney Spindler explained that Commissioners and Highway Department Superintendent recommended that the Council consider two salary schedules due to an ongoing grievance process between the union and the Highway Department. Arbitration has not yet been scheduled.

Council Member McGraw made a motion to approve 2026 salary schedule workbook #2 contingent upon successful arbitration. If arbitration is unsuccessful, an amendment will be made, and salaries will revert to workbook #1. Council Member Riley seconded the motion, and it passed with a 7-0 vote.

Council Member McGraw noted that a \$1.88 pay gap should be maintained between the Chief Court Reporter and Court Reporters. Logan will present an amendment for this adjustment at the January, 2026 meeting. Council Member Riley moved to begin the correct Chief Court Reporter pay rate on January 1, 2026, seconded by Council Member McGraw. The motion passed 7-0.

**Transfer Requests**

General 0005 Sheriff	from	11910 Operator, I.D.A.C.A.	(10,000.00)	T#20
	from	12605 Patrol Officers (9)	(12,000.00)	T#20
	into	12303 Overtime	22,000.00	T#20
	from	11312 Captain (2)	(8,680.00)	T#15
	from	11002 Communication Officers	(10,000.00)	T#15
	into	13400 UHP Part Time	18,680.00	T#15
0006 Surveyor	from	11122 GIS Director		
	into	33003 Professional Services	15,000.00	
	from	11122 GIS Director		
	into	11111 Elected Official	1,726.00	
0008 Assessor	from	35500 Fees Per Diem / Seminars		
	into	26000 Office Supplies	1,232.34	
	from	33003 Professional Services	(3,500.00)	
	from	37103 Maintenance Contracts	(7,000.00)	
	into	26000 Office Supplies	10,500.00	
0061 Council	from	33003 Professional Services		
	into	11201 Council Members (7)	14,561.00	
0068 Commissioners		35501 Burial Of Soldiers		
	into	22204 Supplies-Veteran's	3,300.00	
	from	31205 Postage		
	into	43102 Postage Machine	760.33	
	from	37201 Cattle Testing		
	into	26000 Office Supplies	1,000.00	
	from	12307Group Insurance		
	into	11100 Commissioners (3)	6,241.00	
0161 Ct House	from	35200 Equipment Repairs/Maintenance		
	into	23501 Institutional Supplies	1,000.00	
	from	35201 Renovations		
	into	23501 Institutional Supplies	600.00	
	from	36002 Pest Control		
	into	23501 Institutional Supplies	450.00	
0201 Sup Ct	from	44101 Equipment		
	into	31109 Medical / Psych Exams	4,200.00	
	from	44101 Equipment		
	into	33204 Conference Travel Costs	800.00	
0235 Probation	from	10305 Sup Court Probation Officer #2		
	into	10106 Sup Court Chief Probation Officer	0.06	
	from	10209 Circ Court Asst Chief Probation Officer		
	into	10304 Sup Court Probation Officer	13.56	
	from	10505 Circ Court Probation Officer	(7,053.92)	
	from	11125 Circ Court Probation Asst	(28.96)	
	from	12300 Severance	(6,424.00)	
	into	10506 Circ Court Pro Probation Officer	13,506.88	
0301 EMS	from	44101 Equipment		
	into	31403 Telephone	248.00	
	from	42201 Durable Equipment		
	into	22202 Uniforms	2,500.00	
	from	22402 Regular Ambulance Supplies		
	into	31403 Telephone	700.00	
	from	44101 Equipment		

		into	35200 Equipment Repairs/Maintenance	463.00	
		from	44101 Equipment		
		into	35103 Heart Monitor Maintenance	234.00	
0380 Jail		from	10201 Corrections Officers		T#16
		into	12303 Overtime	100,000.00	T#16
		from	10201 Corrections Officers		
		into	11300 Part-Time	2,000.00	T#17
		from	12306 Matron		
		into	11703 Physician	1.00	T#21
0660 IV-D		from	31205 Postage		
		into	11900 Case Manager	1,638.40	
MVH Fund 1176			Department: 0530 Hwy Administration		
		from	11805 Engineer/Superintendent		
		into	12303 Overtime	10,000.00	
			Department: 0531 Hwy Maintenance & Repair		
		from	11115 Truck Driver (10)		
		into	12303 Overtime	10,000.00	
Recorder's Perpetuation Records 1189					
		from	11300 Part-Time		
		into	12307 Group Insurance	562.00	
Supplemental Public Def Service Fund 1200					
		from	31210 Trial Attorney Fees		
		into	12102 Trial Attorney Fees	5,000.00	
Statewide 9-1-1Fund 1222					
		from	11002 Communication Officers		
		into	12303 Overtime	8,000.00	T#22
Prosecutor Deferral User Fee 2502					
		from	40200 Adult Prot Services		
		into	22000 Supplies	1,000.00	

Council Member McGraw motioned to approve all transfers, seconded by Council Member Riley. The vote was 7-0.

Council signed two Additional Appropriation Resolutions.

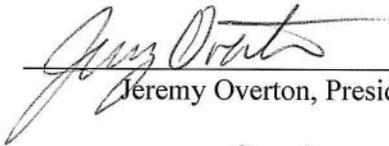
### Public Comments

- **Gibson County Chamber of Commerce presented by Director Vanoven**
  - A retirement celebration at the Gibson County Visitor's & Tourism will be held today from 4-7. Eric Heidenreich is retiring after 27 years of service.
  - New Year's Eve is Chamber Day at the Thunderbolts Hockey Game.
  - January 26 is Chamber Day at the Statehouse and meet your Legislator.
- **Larry Michel**
  - Solar and energy project tax credits need to be filed before the Big Beautiful Bill eliminates them.
- **Kathy Lloyd**
  - Posed questions about the solar abatement. The Council explained that no action had been taken on this matter as they are awaiting forthcoming information.

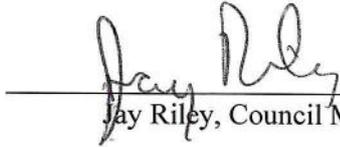
### Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn by Council Member McGraw.

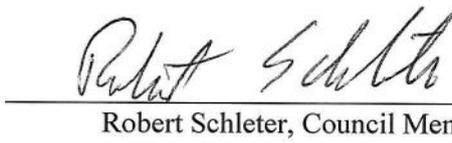
Minutes from December 16<sup>th</sup> regular meeting.

  
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Jeremy Overton, President

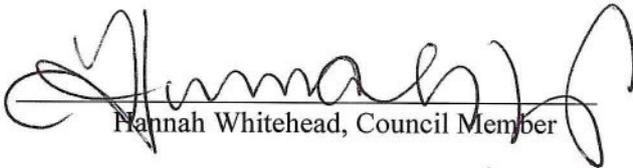
  
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Derek McGraw, Vice-President

  
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Jay Riley, Council Member

  
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Craig Schafer, Council Member

  
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Robert Schleter, Council Member

  
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Michael Stilwell, Council Member

  
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Hannah Whitehead, Council Member

Attest:   
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Michael A. Watkins, Gibson County Auditor

