

**Gibson County Council
Regular Session Meeting
May 12, 2026 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 (absent)

Also, present were:

- Auditor Mike Watkins
- 1st Deputy to Auditor Kristy York
- 2nd Deputy to Auditor Logan Vickers

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Approval of Minutes

- The Council approved minutes as written from the April 14th regular meeting.

Acknowledgements

- Clerk's report

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

EMS (Emergency Medical Services) Presented by Arica Cole

- EMS provided an operations report.
- EMS is fully staffed.
- The new ambulance should arrive in June.
- National EMS Week is coming up.

Sheriff Department presented by Sheriff Vanoven

- Deputy positions: one opening.
- Corrections positions: four openings.
- Communications positions: no openings.
- Community Corrections positions: one opening.
- There was an average jail population of 104 inmates.

OLD BUSINESS

Personnel in Prosecutor's Office - Presented by Prosecutor Cochran

- The Prosecutor had previously requested approval to hire an Administrative Assistant; Commissioners have approved.
- This expense will be paid from the Deferral User Fee.
- This is included in the Salary Ordinance Amendment

Jail Demolition Project Presented by Owners' Representative, George Ballard

- Pre-demolition meetings will be held today.
- They have some interested companies for this job.
- The demolition job will be bid in June.

2026 Salary Schedule Amendment #2 - Presented by Logan Vickers

- Added a part time employee to the veteran services department.
- Added an Administrative Assistant to the Prosecutor's department.

Council Member McGraw motioned to approve this salary schedule amendment #2, seconded by Council Member Riley. The vote was 6-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Safety LIT Request for 2027 – Presented by Trustee Phyllis Ernst

- LIT public safety tax rate began in 2025.
- In 2026, some fire departments requested a share of that tax and received funding through an ordinance.
- Fire departments must submit a request each year to receive LIT Public Safety tax funds.
- Patoka Township is again requesting its 2027 share of the LIT Public Safety tax.
- Center Township is requesting permission to send a letter so it may receive a share of the LIT Public Safety tax, which it does not currently receive.
- Council Member Riley explained that the ordinance would cover any eligible fire department that requests LIT Public Safety tax funds.
- The County Attorney will determine which entities are eligible to receive the tax.

Council Member Riley moved to approve the maximum allowable pass-through amount for all eligible entities, as defined by Indiana Code, for the LIT Public Safety tax. Council Member McGraw seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0.

Request to Amend Sheriff's Fleet Maintenance Fund Mileage Rate – Presented by Sheriff Vanoven

- Ordinance 2024-1 set up the Sheriff's Fleet Maintenance Fund.
- The department has been able to recover costs through this ordinance.
- The department requested an amendment to align the ordinance mileage reimbursement rate with the State of Indiana rate.
- The Sheriff also requested authority to adjust the rate up or down by a nickel.
- This fund applies to off-duty work performed by the Sheriff's Department.

Council Member McGraw moved to amend Ordinance 2024-01 to reflect Indiana's mileage reimbursement rate and to allow the Sheriff to adjust the rate up or down as needed. Council Member Stilwell seconded the motion.

Council Member McGraw then amended the motion to allow the rate to be set at the highest state rate. Council Member Stilwell seconded the amended motion. The motion passed 6-0.

RDC Update - Presented by Council Member Schleiter

- The Council recognized former RDC member Larry Michel for his service.
- Council Member Schleiter expressed concerns about the resolution recently passed in connection with the proposed TIF.
- Mr. Michel and others in attendance feel that Toyota should fund its own infrastructure improvements rather than receive the proposed TIF.
- Matt Holden was present and discussed the roads proposed for paving.

- Commissioner Lewis provided an update on the I-69 sewer project and reported that the project is nearing completion.
- Council Member Schleter wonders if the confirmatory resolution could be reconsidered.
- The next RDC meeting will be held on June 1 at 7:00 p.m., rather than on its regular meeting date and time.

Remarks by Former RDC Member Larry Michel

- Mr. Michel said that he served on the RDC Board for five years and found the experience rewarding.
- He feels the RDC should exercise tighter fiscal oversight.
- He said that having a Council member serve on the RDC Board would improve communication with the Council.
- He expressed concern that the resolution was passed without sufficient discussion, and he feels the confirmatory resolution should be rejected.
- He also said that the declaratory resolution should be rescinded or amended because he feels it has too many open-ended provisions.
- He wonders if the proposed TIF could negatively affect school planning and budgeting.
- He said that the County Council should exercise caution before approving the declaratory resolution.
- He said that county taxpayers are concerned about continuing to fund improvements to Toyota perimeter roads.
- He asked where the County's obligation of maintaining Toyota perimeter roads is specified.
- He said that Toyota has served the county well and would likely be cooperative in discussions.
- He said that the County and Toyota should discuss the issue directly rather than shifting the cost to taxpayers.
- Mr. Michel offered an example of how future road maintenance might be funded. He suggested a \$10 million tax abatement that would allow Toyota to invest the funds for future road improvements.
- He said that this approach could help keep tax rates stable while allowing Toyota to continue paying comparatively low tax rates.
- He emphasized that communication is essential.
- He said that approval of the resolution could increase tax rates in Patoka and Union townships.
- The Council thanked Mr. Michel for the information and for his service.

Randy Kiesel, Gibson County Business Owner

- Thanked the council for taking care of the taxpayers.
- He does not feel the TIF is good for the County, nor does he feel that it is justified because Toyota is an established business.
- He is a developer and the county had told him the roads, infrastructure, and their maintenance would be at his cost.
- He does not feel another 30-year TIF is justified.
- He asked them to consider the justice of a TIF district.

Highway Department Presented by Engineer Holden

- Requested permission to replace two retiring employees, which is in the budget.
- There was no objection to this.
- The Governor has suspended the gas tax due to the excessive cost of gas. This will directly affect the Community Crossings Grant.
- He also feels MVH and LRS distributions will be affected by the May gas tax and excise tax suspension. They are not cutting projects yet but keeping a close eye on future projects.
- Engineer Holden clarified that this is not the first maintenance to be done on the Toyota perimeter roads.

Councilman Schleiter exited the meeting.

Transfers Requested

1000 General Sheriff 0005	From	11312 Captain (2)	
	To	11300 Part-Time	\$20,000.00
EMS 0301	From	12303 Overtime	
	To	11300 Part-Time	\$80,000.00
EMA 0302	From	11300 Part-Time	
	To	35000 Contract Services	\$14,000.00
Jail 0380	From	10201 Corrections Officers	\$(31,000.00)
	From	12204 Shift Super	\$(17,000.00)
	From	11300 Part-Time	\$(2,000.00)
	To	12303 Overtime	\$50,000.00
1135 Cum. Bridge	From	11103 Bridge Foreman (1)	
	To	11101 Leadman	\$54,000.00
	From	11305 Bridge Crew (1)	
	To	11102 Truckdriver/Laborer	\$48,000.00
	From	11316 Bridge Crew Operators	
	To	11114 Equipment Operator	\$49,000.00
1176 MVH 0531 Maintenance & Repair	From	11115 Truck Driver (10)	
	To	11102 Truckdriver/Laborer	\$576,000.00
	From	11218 Gradall Operators	
	To	11114 Equipment Operator	\$588,000.00
	From	11308 Light Equipment Operators	
	To	11117 Yard Operator	\$49,000.00
	From	11414 Heavy Equipment Operators	
	To	11405 Road Crew Leader (3)	\$162,000.00
0530 Office Admin	From	11311 Bookkeeper/Dispatcher	
	To	11118 Office Manager	\$49,000.00

Council Member McGraw motioned to approve all transfers, seconded by Council Member Riley. The vote was 5-0.

Additional Appropriations - Request to Advertise

1000-32100-0301 General EMS Ambulance Repairs \$30,000.00

Council requested they make a transfer rather than request additional appropriations.

1170-22000-0000 LIT Public Safety Supplies \$30,000.00

EMA Director McKinney explained that she and her committee would like to set up a search & rescue program in the county. They want to purchase devices for people with certain medical conditions such as Alzheimer's, special needs, and autism; they would also provide service/maintenance on the devices. They have people on a waiting list to get the devices. They want to minimize the cost to families that wish to take part in the program. The long-term funding source of this program is grant-seeking and fundraising. Project Lifesaver will help with the fundraising. They would like to place receivers in each section of the county (N-S-E-W). The county has two receivers and two transmitters. They have interested donors.

Council Member McGraw motioned to approve advertising this additional appropriation request, seconded by Council Member Riley. The vote was 5-0.

1170-44209-0000 LIT Public Safety Outdoor Warning Siren \$431,771.

Councilman McGraw motioned to approve advertising this additional appropriation, seconded by Councilman Riley. The vote was 5-0.

Councilman Riley wonders what the delay is on this project; he thought it had a completion date of October, 2025. He asked Director McKinney to add pressure on them to complete the job or pay for the upkeep and repairs of the old system.

Additional Appropriation Resolution

1000 General Fund	Personal Services	\$10,800.00
2502 Prosecutor Deferral User Fees	Personal Services	\$60,000.00

Council Member McGraw motioned to approve this additional appropriation resolution, seconded by Council Member Stilwell. The vote was 5-0.

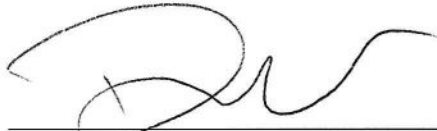
Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Council Member Riley.

Minutes from May 12th regular meeting.



Jeremy Overton, President



Derek McGraw, Vice-President



Jay Riley, Council Member



Craig Schafer, Council Member

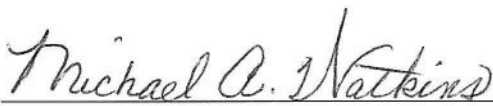


Robert Schleiter, Council Member



Michael Stilwell, Council Member

Hannah Whitehead, Council Member

Attest: 

Michael A. Watkins, Gibson County Auditor



