Martin County

THE MARTIN COUNTY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
April 6, 2026
MINUTES

The Martin County Council convened in a regular session on Monday, April 6, 2026, in the Commissioners' Room at the Courthouse located at 129 Main Street, Shoals, Indiana. Council Members attending were Warren D. Albright, Monty Gregory, Jim Hamby, Sheri Bowling, Gerald D. Montgomery, Jim Woody, and Jordan Berry. Also attending was Auditor Michelle Norris.

President Albright called the meeting to order with the Pledge to the Flag at 6:30 pm.

RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

President Albright asked if members had a chance to review the minutes of the last meeting. Monty Gregory made a motion to approve the minutes from March 2, 2026, seconded by Jim Woody. All in favor, motion passed.

RE: MID-STATES CORRIDOR UPDATE

Jason McCoy, a representative of the Property Rights Alliance group from Dubois County, provided a detailed update on the opposition to the Mid-States Corridor project. He explained that the group was formed a year and a half ago to coalesce public opinion against the proposed highway. Mr. McCoy stated that an initial perception was that the project was a "done deal," a narrative he attributed to project proponents to demoralize opposition. His efforts focused on demonstrating that a majority of residents were opposed. He described commissioning a professional, triple-blind poll in Dubois County which found that 81% of respondents were "vehemently opposed" to the corridor.

Mr. McCoy detailed the political and financial motivations he believes are behind the project. He presented a dossier to the Council regarding the Mid-States Corridor. He asserted that the opposition's strategy shifted from a local to a state-level issue, culminating in the passage of Senate Bill 27. Mr. McCoy explained there was language within this bill to defund the Mid-States Corridor project. This legislation now requires any project exceeding $250 million to seek specific approval from state legislators.

Mr. McCoy reported that the Dubois County Council recently voted six to one to dissolve the Regional Development Authority (RDA), the entity facilitating the project. He expects a final, successful vote to end the RDA in the coming weeks. Mr. McCoy concluded by stating that while proponents will likely continue to advocate for the road, it is finished for all practical purposes. Mr. McCoy stated the Property Right's Alliance will now focus on working to unseat politicians who supported the corridor against the will of their constituents and support new candidates who will represent the public's best interest.

RE: TOURISM ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION

Auditor Michelle Norris presented an additional appropriation request on behalf of Tourism for Fund 1127. The request was for $8,800.00 for a Part-Time Administrative Assistant and $674.00 for the corresponding FICA contribution, totaling $9,474.00. Dianna Ragsdale, Secretary on the Tourism board, explained that Tourism is currently operated entirely by volunteers who also have full-time jobs, making it difficult to manage essential duties. The new position would be budgeted for approximately eight hours per week, with a potential increase to ten hours for special events. Responsibilities would include updating the website, managing social media, compiling a county-wide events calendar, and participating in regional tourism calls. Monty Gregory inquired if a candidate had been identified, and Ms. Ragsdale confirmed they had someone in mind who is tech-savvy and self-driven. The new employee will be housed in the Alliance office. It was confirmed by Ms. Ragsdale and President Albright that the department has sufficient funds in their budget to cover this appropriation and other potential costs like mileage. A motion was made by Monty Gregory to approve the additional appropriation for the Tourism part-time administrative assistant from Fund 1127 for a total of $9,474.00, seconded by Jim Hamby. All in favor, motion passed.

The appropriation is as follows:

Tourism- Fund 1127		
1127.000.1000.11	Part-Time Administrative Assistant	$8,800
1127.000.1000.12	FICA	$674
TOTAL FOR TOURISM FUND		**$9,474**

RE: MOTOR VEHICLE HIGHWAY FUND ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION

Auditor Norris reported that the Commissioners received a letter from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regarding fund distribution to the county's four fire departments. (DNR timber money received was $17,839.34.) Per the letter from DNR, the minimum allowable distribution was $1,000, and the maximum was $2,229.92 per fire department. The Commissioners voted to give the maximum amount, totaling $8,919.68. The county had only budgeted $6,000 for this, creating a shortfall. To cover the difference in the budgeted amount, a pencil transfer in the MVH fund (1176) was made from the workers' compensation line to timber distribution to cover the expense. Jim Hamby mentioned his department used the funds for a new sliding unit for a truck. A motion was made by Jordan Berry to approve the additional appropriation of $2,919.68 in fund 1176, seconded by Gerald Montgomery. Jim Hamby abstained. All others in favor, motion passed.

The appropriation is as follows:

Motor Vehicle Highway Unrestricted- Fund 1176		
1176.533.3000.21	DNR Timber Sales Distribution	$2,919.68

RE: EMS LIT FUND APPROPRIATION

Auditor Norris explained the need to adjust the ambulance expense budget. Initially, she planned to create a new department within the EDIT fund for clarity. However, she realized that EMS LIT (Local Income Tax) money has been coming in since January, at a rate of approximately $49,000 per month, and the fund balance is now $145,122. Therefore, the ambulance salary budget should be moved from the EDIT fund to the new EMS LIT fund (Fund 1236). She noted that ambulance salary expenses for January and February were about $48,000 per month, slightly less than the incoming revenue. Auditor Norris stated she will bring a de-appropriation for the EDIT fund to the next meeting to ensure the figures are exact, as required by the State Board of Accounts. Warren Albright and Monty Gregory noted the revenue was higher than initially projected, which was a positive development. A motion was made by Monty Gregory to approve the additional appropriations for fund 1236, seconded by Jordan Berry. All in favor, motion passed.

The appropriation is as follows:

EMS LIT- Fund 1236		
1236.000.1000.23	Director	$69,543
1236.000.1000.24	EMT-B1	$32,590
1236.000.1000.25	EMT-B2	$31,003
1236.000.1000.27	EMT-B4	$33,561
1236.000.1000.28	Part Time EMT-B	$31,513
1236.000.1000.29	EMT-P1	$50,243
1236.000.1000.30	EMT-P2	$54,270
1236.000.1000.31	EMT-P3	$51,666
1236.000.1000.32	EMT-P4	$39,545
1236.000.1000.33	Part Time EMT-P	$28,416
1236.000.1000.34	Driver	$16,202
1236.000.1000.35	Stand-By	$62,053
1236.000.1000.36	Overtime	$69,658
1236.000.1000.42	Administrative Assistant	$33,460
1236.000.1000.45	Part Time Drivers	$7,591
TOTAL FOR EMS LIT FUND		**$611,314**

RE: SALARY AND WAGE ORDINANCE AMENDMENT 2026-14

Auditor Norris presented Salary and Wage Ordinance Amendment 2026-14. The amendment serves two purposes. First, it adds a part-time Administrative Assistant position for the Tourism department, with an hourly rate range of $15.00 to $20.00. Second, the amendment formally moves the existing ambulance salary ranges from the EDIT fund to the newly established EMS LIT Fund (1236), reflecting the additional appropriations previously discussed. A motion was made by Monty Gregory to approve Salary and Wage Ordinance Amendment 2026-14, seconded by Jim Hamby. All in favor, motion passed.

RE: AMBULANCE SERVICES REPORT AND UNCOLLECTED RECEIVABLES

Auditor Norris presented the 2025 year-end report from Ambulance Director Jeramey Osborn. Total runs in 2025 were 1,361, compared to 1,424 in 2024. Money collected in 2025 was $465,771.19, an increase from $436,789.77 in 2024. A significant point of discussion arose from the outstanding receivables, which total $477,837.35. This amount includes $151,696.38 from 2025, $144,996.89 from 2024, $152,972.19 from 2023, and $28,171.89 from 2022. The Council expressed serious concern over the nearly half-million dollars in uncollected debt and the lack of a collection service. Jim Hamby questioned why no action has been taken. Auditor Norris explained she had brought it to the Commissioners, who were hesitant to use the state tax refund intercept program due to concerns about taking money from residents' tax returns. The alternative is a traditional collection agency. The Council discussed the need to pursue collection.

The Council members agreed that the billing process itself may be part of the problem and that a breakdown of the debt by payer (private pay, Medicare, Medicaid) is needed to understand the true collectible amount. Auditor Norris stated she would attempt to contact the current billing company again to request a detailed payer breakdown. The Council also discussed exploring a new billing company, with Med-Bill being mentioned as a possibility as they were used by other Indiana counties. Monty Gregory suggested an executive session with the Commissioners to address the issue.

RE: AJOURNMENT

With no further business, a motion was made by Monty Gregory to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Jim Woody. All in favor, motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:24 PM. The next regular meeting of the Martin County Council is scheduled for May 4, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. in the Martin County Courthouse.

Warren D. Albright — Monty Gregory

Jim Hamby — Sheri Bowling

Gerald D. Montgomery — Jim Woody

Jordan Berry

ATTEST: Michelle Norris, Martin County Auditor