

Randolph County Council

October 7, 2025

The Randolph County Council met at their regular meeting at 9:00 AM in the Commissioners and Council Room in the Courthouse with the following members present: Board President David Lenkensdofer, Beverly Fields, Mike Stine, Todd Holaday, Greg Cheesman, Scott Fisher and Larry Preston. Also present was Randolph County Chief Deputy Auditor Nikola Clevenger, Sheriff Art Moystner.

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Hearing – Local Income Tax Bonds, Series 2025 \$6,000,000

David said anybody would like to speak in favor or against. I'm going to invite Jason Semler up from Baker Tilly to explain the whole process. That way, we all understand. So, Jason, would you like to come up?

Jason Semler said Jason Semler, Baker Tilly, serving as financial advisor for the county. In front of you, I'd just handed out some schedules, kind of illustrating what is in front of you, as far as the bond ordinance. We had been asked to look at, looking at financing for the highway garage. If you turn on page 2, based upon some preliminary bids that received for the highway garage, I think also the morgue, and they total about \$5,316,000.00 expenses.

David said it's for the jail

Jason Semler said I'm sorry, the jail, yeah, the jail, sorry. Jail improvements. So, about \$5,316,000.00. Anything else you see on page 2, we've also included some allowance for issuance cost for whoever purchases these bonds if you decide to go forward with the financing. There'll be some upfront cost that they'll require. And then all your professional fees, we've got an allowance for there as well. So, you'll be looking at a total project or total financing, about \$5,550,000.00. And we're looking at paying this back from the special income tax that the county has in place. And then we're also recommending that we put a property tax backup behind this. That's what we've done for all the other bonds that you've had outstanding, that you've issued and that you still have outstanding now from, payable from the special income tax. That property tax backup, is really just gives the bond purchasers extra security, that if for some reason that the income tax is not sufficient, that you already have the authority to levy a property tax to pay any shortfall that there might be. And we're going to show here in a minute that we don't anticipate that there will be a shortfall. It just gives us, will give us a better bond rating for the bonds that we request. And it'll give the bond purchasers more security that these bonds will get paid and allow us to get the lowest interest rate possible. It's really just to make the bonds more marketable and make it as efficient as possible for the county. Like I said, we've done that for all the other bonds. There was a time where we did have a combination of local income tax

and property taxes that went to pay off a couple of the bonds, but the income taxes grown to the point where we don't need a property tax, and haven't for years. So, page 3 looks to how we're anticipating that 5.5 million dollars be paid back. We're looking at a 20-year bond issue. You can see that we're not really anticipating any principle being paid until 2035. So, it's just interest only throughout the next 10 years. And I'll show why we're doing that here shortly. And then after that, we start paying principle after the 10 years. I know one of the questions was asked, could these bonds be paid off early? Typically, we structure these bonds that they'll be, we can pay them off either completely, or we can refinance them after 10 years. We could do that earlier than 10 years, but typically, you know, whoever is buying these bonds, you know, these interest rates that I'm showing here, they kind of want to know they're going to get that interest over a certain period of time. They would allow us to potentially refinance them or pay them off before 10 years, but we're probably going to see a tick in the interest rate that we're going to have to pay because they're going to charge you for that flexibility. So, typically 10 years is pretty much the norm in the industry, so that's what we are recommending here for the county, unless you decide hey, we really think we're going to pay these off sooner than 10 years. Then we can structure that. But the rates are probably a little bit higher than what we're showing here. So, then page 4 looks at the special purpose lit revenue. So, in 2026, we're estimating then that you'll bring about 1.5 million in revenue. As you know, you have 2 bonds that are currently outstanding, payable from this revenue stream, the 2019 bonds and the 2020 bonds. So, you see those payments there. And then 2025 bonds, the payment there I just showed you is the 4th column there. So, you're looking at your total annual payment if you go forward with this, is about a million dollars. So, it shows that you have about \$490,000.00 left over, even after the payment of these bonds. So, almost a 150% coverage. So, one we structured, I mentioned on the previous schedule, we're not paying any principle for the first 10 years. You may think well that's not very efficient, we have some room, why can't we pay more principle sooner. One, we have to show that we have 125% coverage on all 3 bonds, which we do. But also, talking to Meeks, there might be a desire to issue bonds next year for some road improvements or for some other projects, payable from this source. So, by not paying any principle, this gives us flexibility to do another bond issue, another project, next year that the county desires.

David said okay I'm not familiar with that. Is anybody else?

Scott Fisher said I thought we were told we can't do a road with a bond.

David said yeah, you can.

Jason Semler said with income taxes, not property taxes, may have been what you were told.

David said we do have the wind, solar monies that we should be using for roads.

Gary Friend said can I come up, Dave? Can I come up here?

David said yeah, come on up.

Gary Friend said I'm going to answer Scott's question too.

Scott Fisher said I asked that question about bonding road projects.

Gary Friend said because of emergency services was the LIT, it's for emergency services. Gary Friend, county commissioner. Thank you. I'd ask the question earlier about the possibility of using that particular funding source for covering a bond, but you can't do the road is what I found out, because that's not in the allowable uses of that particular funding source. It's for emergency service style projects. So, that's why Scott asked that question, and one thing I'd like to ask Jason while we're going too, is what kind of a property tax rate would go, do you know on that?

Jason Semler said if you actually had to levy a property tax?

Gary Friend said yeah, yeah.

Jason Semler said I have not done that just because I knew that we weren't intending to, so I didn't calculate that, but I can.

Gary Friend said I was just curious.

Todd said could, if we did have to do that, wouldn't it still be subject to the caps?

Jason Semler said uh huh, it would be.

Todd said so it probably wouldn't have any effect on the overall rate anyway.

Jason Semler said it would have, depending on where you live. It's like those taxpayers that live in the city of Winchester, it wouldn't increase their property taxes or Union City, because they're already at the cap. But those who live out in the county and the townships, it probably would increase their property taxes. It all depends on where you live.

Gary Friend said to answer your secondary question, Dave, to my knowledge, there's not other bond being considered at this particular time.

David said okay.

Gary Friend said I think what we're talking about here is we don't want to remove the possibility, the necessity of having to do it. But right now, there is no other bond in discussion.

David said okay.

Gary Friend said I'll just wait here in case there's.

David said okay. Any questions for Jason on what he's said? So, it looks like we're going to have an excess of 467,000 for 2026, plus what we have in the account right now.

Jason Semler said correct.

David said because why I asked that, I've got, I'm going to bring up later, we've got some other projects where they're going to need to be doing and we'll need to figure out where we can take them from. If we can use the special LIT, I'm going to advise using special LIT, but I'll have to know if they do qualify. The morgue, that would qualify for special LIT, is that correct?

Gary Friend said the morgue would, yes.

David said okay. But the bonds are for the morgue and the jail?

Gary Friend said yes, because the bond limit is out at 6 million. The jail bids and quotes have gone up about 10% because we started this 8, 9 months ago.

David said so, what happens if we don't use the LIT, I'm sorry, the bond for the morgue? What if we use it from the LIT?

Gary Friend said just borrow less money, right?

Jason Semler said yep.

David said and that's, and I knew that. I wanted to make sure everybody here knew that because we do have an excess right now in special LIT. But I would rather for the taxpayers' sake, to bring it out of special LIT instead of bonds.

Gary Friend said I agree with you Dave.

David said that's my opinion. We'll talk about that here later.

Gary Friend said and I agree with that opinion and we brought it into the bond just to save cash in the uncertain times. And so, it's like the airport, the possibility of a new terminal out there can come out of special LIT too. So, and we could either, we could probably afford to pay that outright too if we stay under a million dollars to do it.

David said that's what I'm.

Gary Friend said the morgue conversion is in the 430,000. I don't have exactly in my mind. We're getting ready to sign the contract for that.

Todd said is it always capital projects for LIT, the special LIT?

Gary Friend said no. You can actually fund payroll out of special LIT if it's for a use for, that's in that category.

David said I think you had it in your graph, didn't you?

Jason Semler said you amended it over the years on what it could be used for.

David said I don't know what page it was, but I did read it last night.

Todd said just know in your report that you delivered last month that it showed you know, a pretty good shortfall in 27 and beyond in those areas. Does that make sense to, and that excess of 400 and some thousand dollars, that that one could be used for some of that. So, we do want to keep it healthy overage there right in case we need it for a non-capital project expenses.

David said special LIT you mean?

Todd said uh huh, as a source.

David said one thing question, you know, if that special LIT is continued to grow and we really need to dedicate some of those monies because one of these days.

Greg said they're going to come down because we've got too much there?

David said yeah. We've got to be very careful plus we have the revenue streams from wind and solar and also have the EDIT funds that we know as of today, which will change in 2028. So, I think the balance is there but we need to show the commitments of projects going forward because one of these days, according to the draft that Jason, Baker Tilly put together, the revenue is definitely going to change. So, we need to get these projects done today or at least on the table so we can, they're going to be cheaper, number one, today then it will 4 years from now. And we not have the revenue stream then. Any other questions for Jason or Gary while they're up here?

Jason Semler said do you know when it will be decided if you do want to use some cash on hand towards the project and reduce the bond size? Do you know when that might be decided?

Gary Friend said I think the council can probably decide today.

David said I would like to decide today, see what everyone would like to do. I'm going to bring it up in our regular meeting.

Gary Friend said I don't, the commissioners wouldn't even have I don't think, the right to object to how it's funded, but I don't think we would.

Jason Semler said and going back to the process, even this is kind of the first process, but we are planning on, we're working on the official statements, so, that's the marketing document that will go out and sell the bonds. So, we're working on that now, going to send that to Standard and Poor's which is the rating agency. Some of you may have been involved in the rating calls we've had in the past, the bonds rated, the county rated, to help market the bonds. So, we're kind of on the bond size, but our goal is to sell, probably the first week in December, toward the end of November, first week in December and close on the bonds so you'll have the money in the middle of December.

David said okay.

Jason Semler said you want to try to get these, the bond market is already picking up because rates are still low. They're creeping up, but they're still very low. So, we want to try to get you guys in the process of selling as quickly as possible before we get closer to Christmas and it gets really hectic.

Gary Friend said we might want to consider leaving a little bit of room in the bond for the rate, what it's going to cost us continuing to increase until we get it under contract. I would hope it wouldn't be much, which we don't know. If we do stay like at 5 million 5, and we don't need it all, we don't have to borrow it all, right?

Jason Semler said yeah, we only really want to borrow what we think we're going to spend.

Gary Friend said okay.

Jason Semler said so I wouldn't, if you don't think we're going to need \$400,000.00 for the morgue, then I would reduce the bond size by 400,000, because you don't want to borrow more than what we need.

Larry Preston said I read Jason, but I'm new, is it the maximum interest table 7%?

Jason Semler said correct, yeah.

Jason Semler said and again, as you see on page 3, we expect the rates, interest rates to be much less than that. Now, I wouldn't be surprised if we actually see rates higher than what I'm showing here and that's because sometimes you'll see premium interest rates, because even though rates are you know, at 3 and 4% right now, purchasers might want to see a 5%. But they'll pay the county money up front to have that higher interest rate. We call that a premium. Sometimes, you know, we could get hundreds of thousands or a million dollars' worth of cash up front and we just take that cash up front and reduce the bond by a million dollars. So, it's a wash to you. And that's kind of one reason why we had the interest rates so high is it gives us that flexibility to not narrow our focus on certain purchasers.

David said and is it true would our bond rating be in a triple A type?

Jason Semler said it won't be triple A, but it'll be definitely in the A, double A range. I think all the decisions, you know, looking at the comprehensive financial plan, you still have very healthy balances, you guys have you know, done very well, you know, responsible with your cash on hand, building up your reserves, and being pro-active, you know, with the annual report and making those decisions. All that should go well to continue your strong rating, which is I'm recommending that we do that because you guys do have a good rating which will go out well in the market.

David said it should sell pretty quick.

Jason Semler said yeah.

David said okay. Any other questions, anybody?

Jason Semler said I guess, I do have one other question, knowing that kind of looking back again on page, it's really page 4 I guess, you know, I am only showing the first 10 years, no principle. We can now, we don't think we're going to be doing another bond, I could start paying principle sooner. But again, that reduces our flexibility that if we ever do want to do a bond in the next 10 years, we've kind of reduced that 400,000 to something less. So, that means if we did have a bond we'd pay less, would be required to pay less principle in the future. So, if you still like that flexibility, I can keep the structure like it is and not pay any principle, that way if 2027, 2028, we find out we need to do another bond because of you know, whatever the situation is, this gives us the most flexibility.

David said because of the cash reserve?

Jason Semler said the cash reserve and then now extra each year, gives us the flexibility to do another bond payable from this revenue stream.

David said I can't see of anything major coming at us, because we're sort of cleaning up with the jail renovation, hopefully, the airport terminal, that should be our last major projects, I would think for a while.

Gary Friend said yeah, I agree, of what we know.

David said and that's why we have, why I've been concerned with Rainy Day going forward. That's why we keep putting money aside.

Gary Friend said one thing I would add whatever the council would choose to set the bond, if you want to get real conservative with it, we do have cash on hand to cover a hundred thousand dollars in difference, to spend the entire bond out, like Jason was saying, to borrow what we use, so if there was an overage coming from the jail that it was over the 5 whatever the council chooses, we're not going to be strapped. We have an ability to take care of it. But it would be good to try and land that bond right on the exact number.

David said and we do have other revenue streams.

Jason Semler said yeah, let me know how much cash on hand you want to contribute and we can adjust these accordingly. And then the bond ordinance that you have in front of you, you see that it has a maximum bond issue of 6 million dollars. Again, that was just to allow for some flexibility, so we can always go less than that. Just can't go more than that. So, with applying the cash on hand, we can just show less than what we're showing now.

Gary Friend said I think the goal would be not to do any cash on hand, other than the morgue, to pay out of a different source.

David said that's the same way I'm leaning towards.

Gary Friend said yeah, just land this bond as close to accuracy as possible for the jail.

David said well that's what you want to do, because it looks like one bond comes off in 2034, which is you know, 8 years away, basically. The cycles, we're doing the cycling pretty good. Another bond is off in 2037, so. I just don't see anything major coming at us.

Gary Friend said right now the commissioners haven't discussed anything that we know of that's major coming up. I think we've done well keeping up with what we need.

Larry Preston said and as you said Gary, you don't think the commissioners have any problem with taking the morgue out of special LIT?

Gary Friend said no. As a matter of fact, in the beginning, that's when it started, we just would have said well let's look at bonding it to keep all the cash that we can. So, I don't think there's any issue at all for commissioners. It's ultimately the call of the council, I believe, to decide.

David said and I'll let you know today Jason, what the council decides, because I don't want to hold you up here until we decide.

Jason Semler said and as far as the report, once you have your 2026 budget finalized, you can let us know that or have Laura reach out to me and we'll update that report with the 2026 actual budget year approved and resend that to you.

David said okay.

Jason Semler said so you have the most accurate report.

David said most up-to-date.

Jason Semler said uh huh.

David said okay. Any other questions? Thanks.

Jason Semler said thank you.

David said I would entertain a motion to close the public hearing.

Bev made a motion to close the public hearing. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Public hearing closed.

David said now we'll go into the regular meeting.

Ordinance 2025-13 Authorizing the issuance of bonds

David said our first line item is passing the Ordinance 2025-13 authorizing issuance of the bonds.

Todd said will we be doing the pledge of allegiance and the prayer?

David said yeah, we can do that. (the pledge of allegiance, followed by prayer.) Now we get started with the passage of Ordinance number 2025-13, issuance of bonds. I guess, let's get it on the table, then we'll have it for discussion. I'll need a motion and a second to get it on the table.

Todd made a motion to approve. Mike seconded it.

Bev said do I need to do this for this particular?

David said yeah.

Bev said I move that council pass Ordinance 2025-13 after the first reading.

Todd seconded the motion. All aye votes.

David said now let's have a little discussion. We talked about not including the morgue in this bond. We'll have to have that on public record too so that.

Greg said where is the morgue, the estimate for the morgue project? Do you know? I mean, roughly, how much money we're talking?

David said it's between 450 and 475, isn't it, Gary? That's what I've been told.

Greg said I've heard a lot of numbers thrown around on that, so I was trying to get it nailed down a little closer.

Gary Friend said Gary Friend, county commissioner. I can look it up and get that to you. I think it's in the 430 range right now. That's where I think it's at. I'll look and see.

Larry Preston said even at 10%, that'll put you at 500,000.

Gary Friend said this one here is pretty secure on the numbers. We're ready to sign the contract as soon as he gets it in the courthouse to go forward. That's a little bit different than the complexity of the jail's H-vac system and the stainless steel products and so.

Larry said I think that would be another reason to go ahead and pay for it separately instead of tie it.

Gary Friend said yeah, as long as today, hopefully, when council is done, they do make the commitment to pay for it in a certain fund so we not hung up on waiting for that commitment.

David said and the number's not, it is important, but it, right now, we're just trying to not include it as part of the bond.

Greg said right.

Gary Friend said right. Are you thinking special EDIT to pay for that?

David said special LIT.

Gary Friend said special LIT, I'm sorry.

David said that's what I'm going to recommend. We'll make that decision here right after the, before we get down to business.

Bev said I move that the rules be suspended and have the 2nd and 3rd reading by title only and adopted the same day.

Todd seconded the motion. All aye votes.

Bev said I move that council adopt Ordinance 2025-13.

Todd seconded the motion. All aye votes. Ordinance 2025-13 adopted.

Commissioner's update

David said alright. Commissioner update, Gary.

Gary Friend said well good morning everybody. So, it was good to see quite a few council members yesterday. Most of them, half of them anyway, know this. So, George Caster came with a contract for the assessment which we're accustomed to do, and we approved it. And then we approved the use of the disaster recovery, MOU, for when we did have a disaster, if we'd need outside contractors as fast as we get them, we need a procedure to get them on record what they're going to do and how much they're going to charge us. So, that's what that's about. Hopefully, we don't ever need to do it. But until we do, if we do, we have something to start with. We had quite a discussion on the highway, the old highway barn and I would invite the council to weigh in too, if not today, you know, through the next month or so. This is an asset of Randolph County, I mean, some of the commissioners' control what we do, but the council should weigh in on what you would like to see with that building? Would you like to see it torn down if it were you? Would you like to see it revamped? Would you like to see it leased out for business? These are all the things that we're looking at in deciding what we should do. I like to keep in mind where it actually sets and the housing development that's going on out there. For everybody's knowledge, it is an ag limited zone right now. So, that has to be taken into consideration. But anyway, we're looking at what we should do and I'm just asking the council to weigh in on their opinions on it. Of course, we talked about the Randolph County jail increase to our project. Everybody got a copy of that and I hope it's found the top, but we don't know. We don't know if it's going to continue to increase until we get it under contract. We did sign a blight declaratory resolution to help start tearing houses down in Randolph County. We'd take \$140,000.00 of EDIT funds and we have approved that in the EDIT plan to assign to it, no more than \$10,000.00 per house. And it has to be used to take it down. It's not like you can get it down for 8 and keep 2,000. It's for that and that does include abatements for us, but the cities have to own the house to do it, completely own it. So, that'll hopefully, get people, the cities to

start taking these out of the 2nd tax sale when they come through. I call it the 2nd, but it's when it's you know, we'll give it to any city and town if the county doesn't want it. We put \$10,000.00 for every community, organized community, and 30,000 for Union City, which is larger, and 40 for Winchester, which is larger. And we will see where it goes. Hopefully, it can build itself. We're also probably going to discuss it in solid waste and things on the solid waste to see if there's any contributions that can go on there with it. One thing too, is our EMS director has resigned for personal reasons. And that's effective November the 6th. And that brings me to something I think the council is going to have to consider. Our wages for our director, I believe, is going to be 62,500 next year, I believe, is what's in the salary ordinance, close to it. A paramedic for Randolph County that works nothing but standard shifts throughout the year makes about a total of \$75,000.00 with the 48-hour weeks that they work and 8 hours overtime that they get per week or 16 per cycle. I think it's in Randolph County's best interest to be in a position where we can hire a paramedic to be our director. It's, it is no disrespect you know, the one that, you know, the gentleman that we have, was an assistant, so he came right up through and, our former director you know, said that he could do it. And he did do it. But for personal reasons, he's going to resign. So, I hope the council can look favorably on giving the commissioners the room to offer at least the \$75,000.00 that a paramedic would make so we don't have, I want a paramedic from here forward, because that's like the higher schooled person. And it's kind of hard to have a discussion between a director and a paramedic when the director discussing with the paramedic, no matter who they are, isn't as qualified. That makes sense. And that qualification, I use that word only in the skills in the field, not as the skills in the office, because it is more of an administrative position.

Todd said is that an exempt position? It isn't, is it?

Gary Friend said we don't have any exempt positions.

Todd said right, only the elected officials.

Gary Friend said yeah, only elected officials.

Todd said it can't be an exempt position?

Gary Friend said if we were to do it, we couldn't just exclude it personally, all by itself. We would have to go through and make every like position exempt. And that's something we discussed.

David said we've discussed it in the past.

Gary Friend said it's a little more difficult than in the private side. Here, you know, you have to work the hours to get paid if you're on salary, so to speak. But, yeah, it's, it's not, you know, it's not exempt. It's not exempt from overtime. So, yeah, any questions from you guys? That's basically, there was quite a bit of housekeeping agenda going on, claims to pay and things of that nature. But, that's the bulk of it all.

David said okay. Let's go back to the county barn real quick.

Gary Friend said yep.

David said you know, I'd shared with you about 5 years ago that it ought to be torn down and removed.

Gary Friend said that's one of the proposals.

David said that's my personal opinion.

Todd said one of you were suggesting yesterday, it's kind of like Missy might have been suggesting the sale of it to someone.

Gary Friend said a sale or lease, from what she was saying, she has plenty of people approaching her about the possible use of it.

Todd said would they tear it down then? Would they, or they'd have the option to.

Gary Friend said well, if we wrote into the, first of all, you'd have to go to a bid. You just can't pick somebody to give it to. You'd have to put it up for, because it's public property, but you can put in the curtailments on it, what you expect out of it for it to be bought. One could tear it down, but then you'd have to rebuild on it. If you rebuild the wrong thing on it, then you've got to get it to zoning to see if the zoning is going to go with it.

Todd said it's my opinion on that conversation was if we want to abandon that property, we should do it in the most economically way possible and I wouldn't want to spend money on destroying something to get it ready for somebody to you know, let's just let the next party decide what you want to do with the property.

Gary Friend said and Jake, our building commissioner, Jake Donham, he's got, he's getting 3 quotes, I believe it's 3 quotes for us. Tear it down, strip some of it off and restore it for future use, and building extra storage space at the current highway facility so nothing has to be stored there, because we've got more equipment since we've built the highway out there, the new one.

David said you know how I feel about buildings, either maintain them or get rid of them. It's just as simple as that because it's too costly.

Greg said I liked Missy's comment yesterday about it, if the property was sold, the monies from that could be used at the highway garage to build a building to store the extra equipment they have now. I like that scenario.

David said the only thing there though, you lose control of that area with that, you know, nice housing addition right next to it. So, anybody could go in there and buy it and you have no control over how they maintain that building.

Gary Friend said yeah, that's my concern. Houses are currently under construction out there right now. And the infrastructure is actually on the other side of the road. So, if any type of deal is made with that building group to acquire a strip of land on Huntsville on the other side, that's where the water main is at anyway. They could develop both sides. So, what's down there at the end, the gateway to it in and out is pretty important to that whole development area. So, like you're talking there, Greg, if we were to do something like that, we would have to put specifics of what could and could not be put on that property. But we're getting a lot of people that are wanting to put businesses on that property, and that's something that really needs to be considered. I think every commissioner have people contact them about what they would like to do with it.

Larry Preston said I think it's kind of a tough call because like you know, I thought last night, we built the new highway barn because the old one was inadequate.

Gary Friend said correct.

Larry said so, that's a fact. And then, like you said, next year, or another year, there may be another row of houses go down the other side of Huntsville Pike and I don't think you'd want that sitting at the end.

Gary Friend said there's even been some discussion too, and this is just in candor, let the highway practice on building a roundabout, our highway department.

David said I don't think you're getting much support back there.

Gary Friend said I haven't looked backwards.

David said yeah, we don't want any roundabouts.

Todd said well, we can control it through the zoning side of things what you know, we want there, don't want there. I would not want to.

Gary Friend said that's a good point.

Todd said the private sector from, deciding. Let the market decide what that should be, is kind of how I feel about it.

David said if you put it in commercial, that's a whole range of things that could go in there. A whole range.

Gary Friend said yeah. I ag limited has plenty.

David said okay. Any other questions on that or ideas or? Okay.

Greg said not on that particular subject. Back to your money that was passed, that you passed yesterday for blight.

Gary Friend said yes.

Greg said so you're, the county, your, the commissioners are proposing using county taxpayer money to help clean up blight houses in towns?

Gary Friend said yes. We actually passed it. We're not proposing, we've actually passed it into the EDIT plan. It'll go to the EDIT board next, yeah. But we often do county, it's not just county taxpayer money, it's figured out by your weight of your levy. So, there's a quarter percent tax comes in, let's say it's a million and a half, which we know it is from here, and then your percentage of the county's total levy is how much of that fund you get. So, it's all taxpayers pay into it. Then the cities and towns get their share according to their percentage of the total levy coming in. So, I mean, it's, it helps the county I believe, Greg, if we have a plan to start getting dilapidated homes down instead of losing the total inner cities of our towns and getting out the suburbs, then we have a bigger mess. But you're right, what you said is correct.

Greg said okay. I just wanted to make that clear.

Gary Friend said understand.

Larry said I think this is just the trial. I mean this is the first time that we've did it. We've tried to do it for a long, long time as a trial, and I think there's some avenues for some matching money that are in.

Gary Friend said we're also looking that if the property comes down, and it does get cleaned up and it's sellable to the neighbor or to a developer, that that money goes back into the same fund to go into another one.

David said and we have used EDIT funds before too, in different little smaller towns to tear down houses.

Gary Friend said we have. Well, and other projects. I mean, in other projects we've used EDIT funds for them, that aren't just strictly in the rural part of Randolph County.

David said okay. Let's talk, before Gary gets away, the paramedic salary, the executive director. I'm like Gary, we're going to have to probably bump that up, and I would recommend around 75,000 to get a paramedic executive director out there.

Gary Friend said and that's important for us to know today as we started our application process yesterday, because November 6th is not far in the world of business. I mean it's 4 weeks and here we are. And we have a computer situation out there, which we may take a look at as commissioners too. We don't have any, we don't have an assistant because the plan, and it sounded good, you know, in retrospect, maybe wasn't the best decision for me, is we have 3 shift supervisors instead of an assistant. Well, and I did have a little concern, I talked about it, but I didn't expect this either. So, there's no in line chain of command now. When we lose a director, we have 3 shift supervisors and no one stepping in. And the business of EMS is more than

taking care of the people. It's primary. It's primary to the whole county. There're tons of administrative work that goes on in that office to keep yourself certified and licensed to bill Medicare, to get pharmaceuticals, to stay in business and get your ambulances all certified. There's so much going on in there and I will speak to the other commissioners when we get a session, are we structurally right. Is this a lesson in structure, and how we should structure. No matter how good something may sound and may work, we've left ourselves without a 2nd in command, which worries me some.

Greg said are you suggesting another paramedic for that position, or somebody that's not necessarily a paramedic, just doing the paperwork and stuff?

Gary Friend said in my thinking, which I can't, you know, I can't say everything, but in my thinking, I prefer that the next director be a paramedic.

Greg said well I understand that. But I'm talking about this assistant you're talking about?

Gary Friend said oh, behind, a paramedic?

Greg said yeah, yes.

Gary Friend said I do not know yet. I've been thinking on that Greg. I'm also thinking we have a situation like, let's just use the highway department, we have you know, superintendent of the highway and an assistant, but in the office, an administrative assistant that does all the DOT required paperwork to keep us operating properly in getting our funding. We have an engineer out there now. And I wonder if.

Greg said that's what, that's kind of along the line of what.

Gary Friend said if we have the EMS department setting on, you know, we're coming off the heals of what, 30 years of Diane and Duane, to the different world now. And if we shouldn't have somebody in there that's administratively keeping all the paperwork in line to be in business in the paramedic world. And keep the county, we've got to do it right, because we don't want the county exposed to any kind of lawsuits out there either, from not being where need to be. So, it's a concern of mine that we get structurally proper out there as fast as we can get it, and as diligently. And I don't know if that's just a shift of personnel, or if that's an addition to personnel, I don't know yet.

Greg said okay.

Gary Friend said that's a fair question. I don't know, but I'm thinking you know, primary, we've got to get a director. And it's got to be the one. We can't just.

Larry said I agree with the increase because I consider it a special situation. I mean, all of our employees are important. But like you said, this one is, you know, in a world of their own. And I know, Brad had a lot of administrative stuff and, so, I would be in favor of bumping it to 75, around 75.

Greg said where would the funding from this come from, the extra?

Gary Friend said well, if I might add, and then Dave could easily answer it, but don't forget the, we already are at 62. So, we're only looking at 12,5 and a little bit of perks to match it. So, we're 75% already there.

David said yeah.

Greg said okay.

Larry said in the manufacturing world, that's kind of a common situation where a common worker with his overtime, will make more than a leader, but the leader usually has 4 or 6 years of college. But, yeah, this is a special case.

Gary Friend said yeah and this is, like you're talking in a factory, that's a lot of voluntary overtime work people do. I'm talking about what's a standard shift, which brings 16 hours every pay period. That's a standard shift.

Todd said so, I have a question. The way this is organized now, it had, there was an assistant director, not too long ago, right, because.

Gary Friend said Brad was the assistant to Duane.

Todd said yeah. So, if you're saying there's a lot of administrative work and we're going to have a paramedic fill that role, would it make sense to have a more of an administrative assistant in that area so that the paramedic can not only function as the head of that unit, but also work to create more billable hours, if you've got a lot of, I'm not talking about a 2nd in command, I'm talking about if you're saying there's a lot of paperwork, a lot of organization, a lot of management that's taking up time, that's not really the best use of a paramedic's time, at their rate. I would just say consider that possibility of, if I'm understanding the scenario in the department, we've got a lot of not only so much as we have in the highway, we have the administrative assistant, and then the guys can get out more. I don't know if this director is all, you know, how much time is spending in the field versus at the desk.

Gary Friend said well, we'll have that discussion, Todd. I don't want to strap the manager of it, with any primary duties. I would rather it be he knows or she knows when needed, that you have to go, there's an emergency, there's something going on big, I don't want to personally strap them with 12 hours a shift or 12 hours a week, you must be out in the field in paramedic, because, that he loses control, he or she loses control, I think, of what's going on. You have to be able to.

Todd said just an idea.

Gary Friend said I'm sure we'll have a lot of discussions on this as we, but time is ticking, that's for sure on it. I feel the pressure of it anyway.

David said yeah, and I think we need to make a decision while Gary is still here.

Greg said yeah, absolutely.

Todd said I'd just say, I'd be in favor of allowing flexibility to reconfigure this and change salaries as needed to fill up the new goals. We can't really throw out a number right now if you haven't even decided.

Gary Friend said if I might add, Dave. I think we need to throw out the 75 only for this.

Greg said that way they can advertise that way.

Gary Friend said yeah, for only this here, and I think we should be required, and I would come back to the council as we look at the possibility of restructuring and what that might take as a different subject in this one. Would that be fair?

Mike said yes.

Greg said I move that we move the new head of the EMT out there to the \$75,000.00 structure to match what the other workers are already getting.

Bev said second.

David said it's been moved and a second, we approve, let me clean that up just a little, okay?

Greg said yeah, clean it up.

David said for executive director to be a paramedic at the county EMS. All in favor?

All aye votes. Motion carried.

David said so, anything else, Gary, for us?

Gary Friend said no. The only word that was in that, I was thinking, I intend, my vote is paramedic. I can't speak for the other 2 commissioners. Kind of the way it was worded there, if we hire somebody and they're not a paramedic, we shouldn't take them to the 75?

David said right. Note that in the minutes.

Gary Friend said okay. Anybody else have anything for me? I appreciate it by the way, all of you. Of course, Dave, I'll keep you posted as we go to, and you can pass it right down through the council as you need. I will, and I will, I mean, I've somewhere to go, but I will look that up and I'll try to get a text to you. It's in the low 400,000 range. I just don't want to quote it for the record and be off.

David said okay.

Sydnee Cseresznye – RCU update

David said morning Sydnee.

Sydnee Cseresznye said good morning. Thank you for having me. Sydnee Cseresznye, Randolph County United executive director. Just wanted to come before you to give an update about the organization and where we're at, things we've been doing and accomplishing, and where we're headed. I know several of you were in the commissioners' meeting yesterday, so this might be a little bit of a repeat, but I'll just jump right in for the sake of time. In the last few months, one of the priorities my office has had is tackling some our involvements with state ran and federal ran loans. So, we have 2 federal RLF programs that we administer, one through the USCA and one through the EDA. And then we have one state funded one through OCRA. All of these funding programs are pre-COVID. The USDA one is just over a decade old. And so, what we are doing now as an office is working to get these funds released back into our coffers, if you will, without any kind of federal or state reporting requirements. They're so dated at this point, that a lot of these programs have the capabilities of releasing the funds back to the entities that were originally awarded. So, just want to give a quick update of where we're at with some of those and then talk about an active grant we're working on. So, with the EDA, we're still in preliminary steps of that loan. We are in the process of filing to have that loan released. There's a lot of paperwork that goes along with it, original loan amount, how many awards you've done thus far, things of that nature. I have not found out whether or not that loan is going to be able to be transferred to us, allowing us to use it for another RLF program or if we're going to be required to use it as a grant and spend it down. The OCRA program, we're the furthest along, and we have a conditionally approved eligibility document that OCRA has approved, so that we may start the process of getting the RLF program funds released. We are required to turn that into a grant that we will need to spend down. So, I will come back before the commissioners, hopefully by the end of the year with a public meeting hearing saying that the application is open. So, right now, where we're at with OCRA is putting together a timeline of how long we want the grant to be open and then an application. And once they, I believe that's the last step once they approve that. Then we can release it to the public and we'll have a certain time frame that that is open and we can release those awards. The USDA RLF program, we are, we have submitted our application, our packet, if you will, to have those funds released. I am not sure if it's going to be the same as OCRA where we have to show them what our application looks like and our timeline, but I do know that we are allowed to transition those funds into our own RLF program, which is what I have recommended we do and not spend that down as a grant, so that we will have a consistent form of income for these types of programs.

Greg said what's RLF?

Sydnee Cseresznye said I apologize, Revolving Loan Fund.

Greg said okay.

Sydnee Cseresznye said so, those funds theoretically, will, depending on what we do with interest rates and forgiveness, those funds will be paid back to us once we loan them out. And

that OCRA grant fund, once that is spent down, there will be no more money in that pot for that. So, my goal for Randolph County United is to be able to act as a resource for our local businesses and potential maybe developers coming in wanting to build a park or housing, you know, we have a lot of options we could use that funding for. And I just, my goal is sustainability, quite frankly, for the funds. And so, being able to have something we turn into a revolving program would be really beneficial I think to everybody involved. So, moving on, we are, we, as in Randolph County United are taking the lead on applying for a \$500,000.00 Brownfield grant through the EPA. Where we're at right now with that, I have had members, well I've had some of the commissioners, cities, mayors, and town representatives send me parcels that they believe are Brownfield related projects. And what this grant will do, given that we are awarded is give us funding for phase one and phase two testing. So, we're not at a point in the application where we have to confirm if it's a Brownfield, we can submit parcels that we believe may be. This included residential and housing as well. And so, I am working with BCA consulting, who has actually just completed a \$500,000.00 grant, Brownfield grant, with Union City specifically. And so, we are using that consulting firm. This Brownfield grant program that we are applying for is countywide. So, the parcels that we're looking at are from all corners of the county. So, I think that would be really beneficial for the county especially as it relates to the commissioners' blight project. It kind of lines up those dominoes to fall, if you will, so if we can get that testing done and then the commissioners can potentially award some blight destruction projects and spur economic development in the county. I'm going to move on from there to a completely different bucket. So, does anybody have any questions about those programs right now?

Larry said Sydnee, I was just trying to think out of the box yesterday. Would it be possible say, if the county, in 2026, puts another 100,000 towards like the housing, is there any kind of match in OCRA or whatever could do with that?

Sydnee Cseresznye said I think that's a good question. I don't know the answer to that. And it would be through OCRA most likely, and then the EPA. But, I think, and I don't think this is a surprise to you guys, I think because of what's going on at the federal government, as it relates to funding cuts, and then obviously, the state having a 2.4-billion-dollar shortfall, I don't know what grant money is going to be there. I know that, and this is something I've spoken with leadership about, I know that OCRA's Rural Economic Development line item in the budget that was just passed this legislative session was zeroed out. So, they have money, I've been told that they have money to last them the next 2 years until the next bi-annual budget is passed by the state. But there is no guarantee that that money will be replenished. So, I think that's something that they're working on, but, to be determined. But given that money is there and on the bright side, then yes, I do believe there will be some matching funds. And I believe that would actually help your application's case if you were able to provide that the county would match in some of these areas. So, my next topic that we're, or next bucket that we are involved in is READI 2.0. So, as you may have heard, the state, or the region reached their 65% threshold with READI 1 funding, which therefore allows READI 2.0 funding to be released. I am a part of the regional steering committee that meets to score projects, develop policies about funding and there have been a couple instances, Randolph County included, that have had projects that were once awarded that are no longer viable. And the region committee did not really have a policy on what happens if that funding for those projects is there, but the projects aren't able to move

forward. And so, a couple weeks ago, we as a committee approved a new policy to make sure that those funds can stay in the county, but find ways to be reallocated. Randolph County has about one million dollars to reallocate for one project to various projects. That is up to our discretion. They just have to meet the match requirements and the READI priorities, which are quality of life, housing and childcare. So, what that means. So, at 10 o'clock today, I have a meeting with region 6 steering committee and then at 11 o'clock I have a meeting with the local steering committee. And what we will do on the local level right now is go through previous applications that were submitted back in 2024 for READI 2.0. We'll re-vet those now that the Winchester project that is no longer viable is kind of out of the loop and then we'll work with we have and we're required to take preference on those and priority on those since they did take the time to submit the application. But I do want to put on public record that we are accepting applications for additional projects that may be funded. So, what that will look like is if a business or entity is interested in applying for READI 2.0 funds, you have to fill out the application and complete the funding and match checklist. And then you can send that to me and anybody in my office, and then I will send that to region 6. They have to vet it before it comes back before the local committee and then we'll go through that process again on scoring. It's a pretty quick turnaround. We have to have all of those documents in by November 17th. So, again today, we're reviewing what has currently been submitted and we will probably, I believe next steps we'll probably be reaching out to each of those people that have submitted to see where they're at in their projects, if they've move forward or if those projects are viable themselves. Moving on from that, any questions? Okay. So, workforce initiatives. I am personally working with two pretty large employers in Randolph County. We have one that's going through a pretty significant merger, and I am working with the state offices and agencies to facilitate meetings and to figure out if there's any state support that could be provided to assist in this merger. And those are kind of still in the infancy stages and we're working that out with the new leadership of the organization. I'm also working with another large employer in Randolph County who is looking to potentially make a significant investment in their own operations, and we're facilitating some conservations with the local units on that as well to see if there's any assistance that maybe be needed or could be granted. Outside of that, other kinds of business retention and expansion opportunities that we're working on, obviously, you know as a body that we are a lean staff of three. And so, I have really empowered our other two staff members to help me with the business retention and expansion efforts that we're going to fully roll out in 2026. And so that will take place starting in January and run through our chamber, but not only for chamber members. I do want to make that note, that our business retention and expansion efforts are for all businesses in Randolph County. So, that'll include business visits. I've done some on my own. I know councilor, you were with me on one of those to meet with businesses individually, to talk about workforce initiatives, equipment needs, supply and demand issues. And figure out you know, where you're at, where you want to go, and is there a lane for Randolph County United and/or the county or cities to assist with some of those initiatives. It's been great thus far. I'm really ready to hit the ground running in January on that. And the staff will be supporting me on the more micro level with the smaller businesses. I do truly believe, based on the feedback we've gotten from the staff so far and some of our newest members of our chamber, I believe our RLF and grant program are going to be very successful, once we're able to offer those funds. I think there's a lot of interest in businesses that have been here for awhile that are still pretty small who want to expand, ones that want to start and just need more product. So, I'm excited to start having those conversations once RCU can have that financial backing. In

the meantime, since May, and in 2026, I'd like to do a better job about our office, including myself, keeping track of this. I've probably fielded no less than 2 dozen phone calls from individuals across the county who are interested in some kind of expansion, equipment purchase, opportunities and, you know, while RCU cannot provide those funds right now, I am very fortunate to have a lot of contacts at the state level, so we've been able to act as a liaison of sorts, to get them in front of the right people at the right time so that they can still move forward with their business initiatives. So, we've been a resource. I'm looking forward for us to be a more tangible resource to the community, and that kind of leads me into my next point about what I would like to see in 2026 with Randolph County United in partnership with the county. So, I did some digging and it looks like the last time Randolph County in conjunction with Randolph County United had a strategic plan was back in 2015. I want to know that this is different than a comprehensive plan. A strategic plan focuses more on business growth, workforce alignment, housing, infrastructure and site readiness, and then community priorities. Whereas, a comprehensive plan is a little bit more broad and focuses on zoning and what that looks like in the future. And, so, they're very similar, and often times compliment each other, but for the sake of this conversation, I am talking about a strategic plan. I know that I brought this up to you the last time I presented and now that we're working with the 2026 RCU budget and we kind of understand that that looks like, I would like to propose that in 2026, that Randolph County United and the county partner on an official strategic plan. I think all the buckets that I'm talking about right now are beneficial. I think the results oriented in goal driven, but when it comes to defining results and priorities, everyone has a different passion point and that's what's great about having so much representation and the elected positions. I want to make sure that that's formalized. And I want to make sure that everybody is on the same page about where we are rowing and why. And that's what a strategic plan is for. And because both of your comprehensive plan and your strategic plan are outdated to the point where you would not be able to use them to apply for state funds, I think it's a timely initiative that we can take on. So, that will not be the last time you hear me mention that. I will come with a more formal ask, probably in the first several months of 2026, but that's where my head is at. And that brings me to the 2026 budget. I presented to the commissioners yesterday, we at RCU are operating under the assumption that we are at that 243 budget mark. I know we had talked about it in the council meeting at one point where you may have approved that, but then the commissioners needed to amend the EDIT funds to update that, and then when I presented yesterday, I think there was a question on whether that actually needs to start with the council and what you guys actually approved. That's not an answer I really need something on today. I just wanted to give an FYI of the conversation I had in the commissioners' meeting yesterday and then today, because we are operating with the 243 or 5 mark. And that is inclusive of removing Tourism from our budget, because I believe it was in the area, in the range of 270 something and then it was brought down, and then we were hoping that it would be reinstated at that 240 level for 2026.

David said and I think it was if I remember right from the budget, Sydnee.

Sydnee said Cseresznye said that's what I was under the impression of. I just wanted to, I don't know the next steps. I don't know if it was the commissioners needed to amend the EDIT and, so that's something I figured we could talk about, but I just wanted to let you know where our head was at and where our line items are operating from. With that said, I don't have anything else for you right now. I could probably talk for at least an hour on some of the other smaller

items, but those are the high-level projects we're working on. I'm really proud of what we've been able to accomplish since May and I look forward to work in 2026.

David said alright. Any questions for Sydnee?

Bev said no questions, but thank you. Thank you for the report and it sounds like things are moving.

Sydnee Cseresznye said yes, absolutely. We're excited, so.

Bev said we love to hear it.

David said I know that project, the one project you're talking about, a major project, so, I think it's supposed to come down what, November. We can't talk too much about it.

Sydnee Cseresznye said no, and I kept it pretty vague, but I do have, I do have the governor involved. And so, and he's, I've got word from his office that he's interested, so, in the conversation.

David said alright.

Sydnee Cseresznye said thank you.

David said thanks for coming in Sydnee.

Other Business:

Art Moystner, Randolph County Sheriff

Sheriff's Compensation contract

\$1,500.00 Commissary Fund to purchase Challenge Coins

David said looks like the sheriff's up next.

Art Moystner said morning. I guess one of the first things I'd like to ask is if everyone received the commissary report that I sent out October 1st. With the change in the law, that's now a quarterly report. So, you'll get those more frequently. I just wanted to make sure that everyone had received that.

David said yes, received it.

Art Moystner said perfect. The other thing I believe we had this morning is the contract for the sheriff's salary that was signed yesterday by the commissioners.

David said yes, I have it here in front of me. Okay, it's only one signature by the president of the council. The contract is for \$117,687.00. Just need a motion to approve that. It was in the budget.

Art Moystner said that was the amount you guys set during the budget hearings.

David said based off the state guidelines.

Art Moystner said correct.

Greg made a motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Art Moystner said the other request this morning is for the purchase of challenge coins using the commissary fund. I believe I sent everyone an email explaining what those were and what I would like to use those for. According to the State Board of Accounts, that would be an allowable expense provided the council agrees.

David said what's the council's wishes on that?

Greg said well I'm not clear on what the challenge coin is supposed to accomplish.

Art Moystner said we would use it to, for community engagement, for somebody that goes above and beyond, they would be given a challenge coin by the sheriff's office. It would be just a small token to show appreciation for support of the sheriff's office and recognition. So, basically, it's a community engagement tool is what we would use it for.

Larry said these could be presented at a special meeting or something like mayor or city council or county?

Art Moystner said correct. Yes. I know a lot of, a lot of sheriff's offices have started using those. I believe there're other county governments, they've used those as an engagement tool. And presented at community, I know they use it in the military a lot. It's considered an honor to receive one. And it just shows a sense of pride, belonging, loyalty.

Greg said I'm not sure that money couldn't be used for better, a better use than that, but that's just my opinion.

Art Moystner said sure. And there're limited things they can be used for.

David said anything else, anybody else? I believe in positive initiatives like, you know, rewarding somebody did something. Could a certificate do just as well?

Art Moystner said the, I guess my opinion is I've been in law enforcement 40 years and when I received a certificate of achievement, yeah, there's a recognition, to me that's no different than a hand shake and a thank you. Those are printed off on a printer. You know, if you want to frame it, hang it, you can frame it and hang it. I've received several challenge coins over the years. I sent you guys a picture of what I have up there. To me, it's a thing of pride to receive those and a nice display to have. It's something that if a business does something nice, it could be given to the business. They could display it in their business locally. It's just a small, and it's not an expensive token, but it's a small token of gratitude that is, I don't know, tangible, I guess, to where you can display it.

Scott said I would have to agree with you.

Art Moystner said you could do the same thing with a certificate, but I type it up and print it. So, to me, you handing me a certificate for something doesn't have the same meaning a challenge coin would have, no.

Larry said Art, do you think the next administration would go ahead and carry this forward?

Art Moystner said it would be nice if they did. I can tell you that some of the initials set up, Silver Towne has worked me on this because we're local and I have a big thank you for them. One of the things that's more expensive that is setting up the initial die in getting that setup. And I can tell you the back side of that coin is set up for future generations. It would be the front that would change if it's a different office holder and it's coming from them. So, the sheriff's name would change on that. So, that would be a different die. But the back would be the same. And the way this one was designed is it signifies the county. The back of the coin is actually the soldier, sailor monument of our courthouse, because I think that's the most symbolic thing we have in our county for county government.

Todd made a motion to approve. Scott seconded the motion. 4 aye votes. 3 nay votes (Dave, Mike, Greg). Motion carried.

Art Moystner said so, it is passed. Thank you. Do you guys have any questions for me?

Larry said are the drones coming?

Art Moystner said the drones are here.

Larry said they're here?

Art Moystner said yeah, we've used them a few times now. They are working wonderfully. There're a couple, we're waiting on a couple of batteries that are caught up in the supply chain. But other than that, we have them. We're looking for another source to get a couple more batteries so that we can use those to their full potential. Anybody else have anything for me? Thank you.

Minutes of August 19 and 20, 2025 and September 3, 2025

David said okay, minutes of August 19th, 20th and September 3.

Bev made a motion to pass all three sets of minutes. Mike seconded the motion.

David said it's been moved and a second, we pass the minutes of August 19 and 20th, 2025, and September 3rd.

All aye votes. Motion carried.

Joe Copeland/Jay Long- Community Crossing Letter of Commitment

David said okay, next thing we have is Community Crossing letter of commitment. Is there anything you want to say on that Jay, Nate?

Jay Long said I don't have anything. Do you guys had any questions on it or anything like that.

David said I don't think so. Looks like their request is for a million dollars and local match would be \$345,821.00. Looks pretty much standard.

Bev said I only signed two sets. Is that what there was?

David said yeah, that was, the one big packet was for both the 19th and 20th.

Bev said oh, it was for two days, yeah, okay, got you. I forgot it was two days so, altogether.

David said I don't have any questions. Anybody have any questions for the Community Crossing grant?

Larry said this is what Joe talked yesterday about taking part of the bridge money or something?

Jay Long said yes.

David said entertain a motion.

Greg made a motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

David said okay, anything else for us?

Jay Long said no.

David said if you'll check into that speed limit sign out there?

Jay Long said we already did.

Nate Moore said yeah, he said all his signs are up, so, either it would be the city's or somebody else's sign. Might have been the solar panel. Was it the solar panel speed limit sign that flashes at you?

David said no, it was just a 35 mile an hour sign that was about not quite across from the Waste Water Treatment. It's on the west side of the road.

Jay Long said okay. We'll go by there and take a look at it.

Nate Moore said yeah, we'll go tomorrow.

Washington Twp Library appointment

David said next thing we have is the Washington Township library appointment is Kathy Welch. Entertain a motion to sign this request?

Greg said Kathy Welch, she's wanting to be appointed?

David said yes.

Greg said okay.

Larry made a motion to approve. Bev seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

2026 Salary Ordinance 2025-08

David said the next one I have is the approving the 2026 salary ordinance.

Bev said I move that the council pass Ordinance 2025-08 after the first reading.

Todd seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Bev said I move that the rules be suspended and have the second and third reading by title and adopted the same day.

Todd seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Bev said I move that the council adopt Ordinance 2025-08.

Todd seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

David said now we'll probably have an adjustment on this due to the paramedic today that, well, we'll let Laura work through that when she gets back.

Randolph County Solid Waste Budget Ordinance 2025-12

David said next thing I have is the Randolph County Solid Waste Budget Ordinance 2025-12. Their budget is \$421,370.00.

Greg said is this the one that was missed during the budget hearings?

David said yeah, yeah. We, she came the next meeting or something. We approved it then.

Bev said I move that council pass Ordinance 2025-12 after the first reading.

Todd seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Bev said I move that the rules be suspended and have the second and third reading by title only and adopted the same day.

Todd seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Bev said I move that council adopt Ordinance 2025-12.

Todd seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Drug Free Grant request application

David said next we have the Randolph County request from the probation department for a drug free grant for Randolph County of \$3,000.00. Entertain a motion.

Todd made a motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Children's advocate grant application

David said the next item is the Children's advocate grant application of amount of the match is \$21,000.00. The amount request is 12,352 for the matching grant. So, entertain a motion.

Larry said is that from Jay Toney?

David said it is.

Greg said it is from what?

David said Jay Toney, Judge.

Bev said from Circuit Court.

Larry said is this a pass through grant?

David said yeah, it's a pass through. Entertain a motion.

Bev made a motion to approve. Larry seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Additional Appropriations:

Windfarm 4915

Bridge 85	\$325,000
Bridge 212	\$175,000
Bridge 114	\$100,000

David said we're going into Additional Appropriations, Windfarm, bridge 85, 325,000, bridge 212, a 175,000, and bridge 114, a 100,000. Entertain a motion?

Greg made a motion to approve. Todd seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Drug Free Randolph County

Prevention/Education

\$1,211.65

David said okay, the next item we have is Drug Free Randolph County for prevention/education of \$1,211.65. Entertain a motion.

Scott made a motion to approve. Greg seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Cum Cap Dev

Building Maintenance

\$15,000.00

David said okay. The next one we have is Cum Cap Development, building maintenance of 15,000. Entertain a motion.

Bev made a motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Public Safety/Jail

Institutional/Med Supplies \$3,000.00

David said and the last additional appropriation is for Public Safety and Jail for institutional/medical supplies at 3,000. Entertain a motion.

Greg made a motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Transfer	From	To
\$12,000	Telephone	Equipment

David said we'll go into Transfers. 911 center, transfer from telephone to equipment, \$12,000.00. Entertain a motion.

Mike made a motion to approve. Scott seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

\$10,000 **Commissioners Cum Cap Courthouse Bldg.**
David said next Transfer we have is Commissioners Cum Cap to the Courthouse building maintenance, \$10,000.00.

Mike made a motion to approve. Todd seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

\$400.00 **Training/Schooling** **Office Supplies**
David said next one we have, transfer from probation department, \$400.00 from training and schooling to office supplies.

Larry made a motion to approve. Bev seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

\$2,000.00 **Per Diem Jurors** **Lodging/Meals**
David said okay, the next item, a transfer of \$2,000.00 out of the Circuit Court from per diem jurors to lodging and meals.

Greg made a motion to approve. Bev seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

\$500.00	Office Supplies	Part time employees
\$300.00	Office Supplies	Travel and mileage

David said and we had one that came in at the late arrival of transfer. It's from the Children Advocates of Randolph. It's \$500.00 from office supplies to part-time employees, and \$300.00 from office supplies to travel and mileage.

Larry made a motion to approve. Bev seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Citizen Comments (3 minutes)

David said last item. Do we have any citizens comments out there? Okay. Next thing we'll do is go around the council body here and see if you have anything. We'll start with Scott.

Scott Fisher

Scott said I noticed Modoc was on the agenda and you skipped over them. I expect to see them here next month. Actually, one of the board members was leaving when I came in.

David said well he said he wanted to.

Scott said he thought he was meeting with the commissioners.

David said that's what he told me.

Scott said and what that is about is that's going to be your first blight project. They've spent the last year or two getting ownership of a property there in Modoc. The commissioners had already approved giving them funding to demo that. They didn't have ownership. And I do know they finally got ownership after the last year or two.

David said so they do have ownership?

Scott said and so, but, I think David Sexton sent Tom up here to meet, Tom thought he was coming to meet with the commissioners. And I said well they met yesterday.

David said that's what I told him.

Scott said I called him when I got up here and I said you're on the agenda for today. He said yeah, but I don't have the pictures. I had to bring pictures. So, I assumed he'll be back next month and that's what it's going to be about. It's probably going to be your first, your first request for blight funds.

David said okay.

Larry said was he a couple of months ago?

Greg said not that I know of.

Scott said not, I have not seen him, no.

David said when is the EDIT meeting?

Nikola Clevenger said the 29th at 6 p.m.

David said 29th of October is when the monies will be officially approved through the EDIT fund.

Scott said yeah. And I'm not sure. I assume that's going to come out of that fund, but the commissioners had already committed the funds I think.

David said oh, a separate one, then?

Scott said well, I don't know. Yes, that was approved a year ago. But they didn't have ownership yet. So, I don't know if the commissioners will slide this over and tell them to take it out of the EDIT fund?

David said that'll be up to the commissioners on that.

Scott said but I think we can expect to see them here next month. Other than that, I don't.

Bev said as long as he makes it to the commissioners' meeting is that, that's where he's supposed to go, which is in two weeks. Two weeks from yesterday.

Scott said correct. That's correct.

David said anything else, Scott?

Scott said I don't think so.

David said okay. Thanks. Todd?

Todd Holaday

Todd said I think if you're going to talk about this but, because I think, look at the plan that we got from Baker Tilly, I'm thinking about the projects that have been done over the last several years, you know, fairly big renovations, and not seeing a lot on the horizon, I'm not really sure why we want to have large fund balances and not pay off principle on the loan for 10 years. Why do we want to borrow when we have the funds to pay that at an interest rate that is not really that great advantage to us? So, if you, there's, if you can explain it.

Scott said I was troubled a little bit that we were going to wait 10 years to start paying on the principle. The bond situation is a little new to me, but I was a little confused why we were going to pay interest for 10 years before we started paying on the principle.

Todd said we should have asked him that I guess, the timing I just don't understand. Is there a timing advantage? Is there some, something I'm not seeing as to why we would not? It looks like the balance in that Special LIT fund is 2 point, we have about 2.7 million available I think.

David said show about 3.7.

Todd said 3.7. I thought that some of it was committed or something. I don't know, but it seems like we have that money that can only be used for a certain purpose, for certain purposes, maybe we should not incur unnecessary interest expense.

David said I think when he explained it, that the interest rate, something about it had to do with the interest rate, not for the first 10 years. To actually purchase the bonds.

Mike said the people actually buying the bonds.

Scott said it sounded like it was, that was what you had to do to get the bonds. But, it was a little confusing why, and especially if we have the cash, why are we, why are we going to pay interest on that money?

David said well, let me share something else. We have a couple projects here I want to share with you that's going to be taking care of half of that monies. But also, we have a 2034 bond come due. At any time, the way I understand it, that's within the 10-year frame of the bond, we can actually call it at any time, then you can use that balance of the fund, which on that end will save you money, more money actually, because higher interest rates. So, it's.

Todd said I think there were some, you know, clever thought that went into that, how's this work out.

David said it's sort of, it's a number game is what it is. And plus, we're earning interest off that money, so, it's not like we're not. We're at about 4%, which is about a wash with the interest borrowing. It's a game and it's, and I'll bring that up here in a minute with us and the different things. Anything else, Todd?

Todd said huh uh.

David said thanks. Mike?

Mike said nope.

David said okay, didn't want to share anything about the conference or?

Mike said no.

David said okay, Larry?

Larry said no.

David said Bev?

Bev Fields

Bev said I thought it was a good conference.

David said good conference.

Bev said yes, yeah. There were two specific meetings that were well worth the attending. So, yep, plus all of the conversations of other people who do just what we do.

David said yep. That's where you learn a lot.

Bev said and, yeah. And the good, the bad, the ugly, with it all. I feel so good about how things are handled in Randolph County when I talk to other people in other counties and to what's going on.

David said we've developed good teams over the years that have really done well for Randolph County, I feel like. Greg?

Greg Cheesman

Greg said I just wanted to comment on AIC and what a good thing it was for the day I was there. I hated that I couldn't make it for two days but was glad to be there for the one, and did learn quite a bit.

David said well good, good.

Greg said got more to learn. Wished I could have been there for the second day, but just wasn't going to work.

David said well next year it's a little closer. It's in Ft. Wayne.

Greg said yeah, the next, Ft. Wayne next year, I can make both days.

David Lenkensdofer

David said okay. Just a brief comment on AIC conference. It was a great conference. The county councils of Indiana, the way it's structured right now with the legislation, is going to have their work cut out going forward. They're wanting to put everything back to the county councils. That includes the townships, all cities and towns less than 3500, all libraries. I forgot what the other one was, but it's going to be.

Greg said it's going to make council's job a lot more involved, a lot.

David said EDIT funds will be coming back to county council control.

Todd said township fire departments? Is that a part of it?

David said their budgets, yes.

Greg said yeah, through the trustee.

David said and there're some other movements on that where they may combine townships that one has a fire department and one does not. And there's going to be a lot of discussion about territory and district going forward, because the cost of doing business with all those townships.

Scott said are they going to leave the trustees in place?

David said can't answer that. I don't know. It's all up for grabs right now is the way I understand it.

Todd said a movement like this about 10 years ago too.

David said there was, on township trustees. Okay. Go on to other, here's some of the projects I've got listed that we're going to be facing here in the very near future. We're going to have to do a little courthouse restructuring of office spaces. The County Commissioners want to bring the Probation and Community Corrections to this building. I don't know what that exactly is yet. There's been talk about the clerk's office and the room right below us. So, somehow, they want to structure those three departments in those two rooms. And it can be done. I mean it's, there's plenty of square footage down there. So, how it's going to be done, that's entirely up to them. But, it's probably going to be estimated around \$200,000.00 project. The morgue, you know, we talked about that in a bond or not in a bond. Special LIT, the way I understand it, can take care of that, being EMS type program. I would not include it in the bond if it was me. That would take lesser monies to bond, which also will help the total dollars there. Airport terminal, that can be used out of Special LIT. I've talked to a couple of the commissioners. They don't want to go in between 600,000 and a million dollars max on that terminal. Where that's going, I don't know yet, but that's something that we need to consider going forward. The road, is that 800 West, is that the road number over there?

Bev said yes.

David said that will more than likely come out of the Wind and Solar farm monies. That's what it was dedicated for. Last I knew, it was around two million dollars. Does that sound correct?

Mike said that's the last I heard.

Scott said that's the last I heard too.

David said okay. That's what I, still. And then the jail renovation bond that we talked about today. And I had another note here. Rainy Day, \$250,000.00 by year end going into, coming out of the General Fund and 250,000 out of the Wind and Solar monies. So, we can have another 500,000, which will, right now, we're at about 2.1 million. Our goal is 3.1 million.

Bev said in Rainy Day?

David said in Rainy Day only.

Todd said the courthouse security, is there any capital expense related to that?

Larry said I had forgot to mention that Todd, if I can. Sorry.

Todd said go right ahead.

Larry Preston

Larry said the next meeting is October 15th at noon. The initial figures are in for the, to restructure the north entrance here, and have what they call sally ports on the other two where the door would stay behind only employees. The initial figures look around \$200,000.00 for the, just the structural part and a few changes upstairs. And then you have to consider, you know, we're going to have to have one and one half or two employees to man the system. And we haven't figured that part out yet.

Todd said so, one consideration there is that we, I mean we've talked today that that Special LIT fund doesn't have to just be for capital projects. It's possible we could fund the courthouse security out of that. I think it would come under those, you know, police and emergency-type services.

David said yeah, that's something Meeks will have to tell us.

Larry said and Judge Dowling or Meeks is kind of heading the whole program and they're trying to get the information in by the end of October for a grant.

Todd said if I recall, the annual expense, in labor and so on, which you'd hate to have all fall into the General budget that's already kind of come under pressure here in 26.

David said right. So, if you include that 200,000, we're looking almost 2 million dollars out of Special LIT, which will, that's, that would draw that down enough to move us forward on all these other projects.

Todd said including the morgue then in the 2 million?

David said yeah.

Larry said do we have, do we need to have additional discussion on the morgue today, Dave?

David said well, we need to let Jason Semler, Baker Tilly know that, what our directions are, or, what we're thinking on that bond, because what Jason needs is that he'll release the bond just showing for the jail.

Scott said jail.

Bev said jail only.

David said which would save us.

Larry said is it okay for the council to make a motion?

David said I would definitely want a motion on this one since it involves that kind of money.

Larry said I'll make a motion for the morgue construction to come from the Special LIT fund.

Mike said second.

David said okay, it's been moved and a second, we approve the morgue construction project to be funded out of Special LIT instead of the bond. All in favor?

All aye votes. Motion carried.

David said two other things, well we've talked, well we probably ought to have a motion on the EMS director's salary. Did we do that?

Greg said we did.

Mike said we did.

David said we did. I'm sorry. Last item I have is.

Greg said because you cleaned it up for me.

David said that's right. 2026, I am recommending that we have someone else in president here and a president pro tem. Between you 6, we'll need to have 2 people to take those positions over. I'll still be here next year, but I want somebody to get trained for the following years. So, I'll let you 6 work it out. And I'm going to stay out of it.

Greg said Dave, if you would back up a little bit, but, you were telling about the money that you were wanting to go somewhere and then we got started on courthouse security.

David said Rainy Day.

Greg said I didn't catch that.

David said Rainy Day. 250,000 from the General Fund and 250,000 from the Wind and Solar monies.

Greg said okay.

Todd said we have already made that decision, correct? Or do we still need to do that for this year?

David said we still need to do it for this year. I think we've talked about it in general.

Greg said and the commissioners have never done anything yet as far as percentaging out the numbers on the amount of money going strictly to road, ditches and all that, and then 25% or whatever. They've never done that yet.

David said right. Nothing's been done. I've requested that again, which I have probably I think, every year for the last 5 years.

Larry said one thing I think I heard at yesterday's meeting, with Joe, like he's already told us what he wants for bridges for 2025, and then the commissioners have to change something about he's going to tell us the total for 2026, and so the commissioners will know yearly what, if I understood that right yesterday, about yearly what we'll need for.

David said and I think all of them are pretty supportive of using the original intent of those dollars back to road, bridges and drainage, because, you know, we've got a lot of assets out there that.

Greg said well, but I just feel like we need to get it done before it slips through everybody's fingers and, I mean, let's get this set up, approved by the commissioners if we can.

Todd said on the Wind Farm money out, the 440 some thousand that was loaned to the airport is scheduled to start coming back over 3 years next year, is that right? Or is it?

David said do you know?

Danita said I'm not sure.

Todd said it was a loan wasn't it?

David said it was a loan.

Todd said because of the timing of some federal money

David said yeah, I think that's correct, Todd.

Todd said the \$600,000.00 shortfall that's showing in Cum Bridge now, is that real or is that something where we're waiting on funds to come from a matching source, do you know?

David said we can't answer that off hand. I saw that too.

Larry said I think we're waiting aren't we, do you know?

Nikola said I'm not sure.

Larry said I'm not sure either.

Todd said we'll find out?

Nikola Clevenger said I can check on it.

David said we'll find out for the next meeting. Yeah, I would encourage everybody to you know, Nikki does a great job on monthly financials, always look at those and if you need some help identifying the main ones, we can sit down with that. And she also does the Wind Farm, Solar Farm, and always keeps us abreast of where we're at on that, even though the one's that's already dedicated but not spent.

Todd said and I apologize for getting my calendar messed up last month and missing a meeting. Kind of won't let that happen again. But one of the things that you guys went over was the Baker Tilly report. In their executive summary, they have like 6 recommendations that are, you know, ways to, so, my question that I wondered if you guys had answered that even. When they did their projections, 2027, 2028 and beyond, there was significant shortage as far as General Funds. Did that shortage include the option of, you know, the 1.2% LIT request that they had put in their executive summary or was it in, not built into those numbers. Because, that's a huge difference maker I think.

David said the way I understand it, Jason, based on current legislation that was passed to going forward, he did the 1.2, and that's why you see the drastic reduction. We lose from 2025.

Todd said \$600,000.00 a year that we needed to find.

Scott said well that was 600 the first year, then it was 2 million dollars the following year and 3 million dollars the next year. So, I mean, we've got some serious budget adjusting to do.

David said yeah, 2029 is when it really kicks down.

Scott said well I think 29 was 3 million, but if I'm not mistaken, 28 was 2 million.

Todd said even 26 showed it has.

Scott said 600,000.

David said it was 600 on 28.

Scott said so, I mean I'd been considering every since that report, you know, because we passed this year's budget with pretty much giving everybody what they requested. That's not going to be able to continue.

David said no, after this year, that's going to.

Scott said so, I mean, I kind of see that the sheriff's department and the highway department are the two big budgets, and there's probably going to have to be some trimmed off those.

David said it's going to get critical. There's no doubt about it.

Bev said is LIT expected to part of it go away or will LIT?

David said the way I understand, it's going to 1.2%.

Bev said going down to 1.2% max that you can have?

David said right.

Bev said and we've got, we've got a greater rate of that?

David said well no, that would be actual income tax. The LIT tax, you can only do a 1.2%.

Todd said it was 2.9.

David said 2.9 total.

Todd said a little above 1.2 for the General.

David said General side, yeah. Okay. And we're at 3.0 right now.

Bev said well that's what I was wondering because that's.

David said that's another hit for us.

Bev said it's not going to continue, correct, that's where, alright.

Todd said to me, not to belabor the discussion, but not only, you know, those areas you mentioned Scott, are economic development. I think there's going to be an area that we have to look at as well.

David said the way I understand it, that'll come under the jurisdiction of the county council.

Todd said that's what I thought too.

Larry said I don't remember the gentleman that was here yesterday said that they're doing, that he expects quite a bit of tweaking at the state level.

Todd said you don't want to get too far ahead of yourself, yeah.

David said I think there also will be some adjustments. You guys will have to do some rethinking going forward at the 2026 calendar.

Greg said the way things currently stand, it would be, it'll be severe. It will be severe.

David said any other questions or things to come before the county council?

Adjournment

David said entertain a motion to adjourn.

Greg made a motion to adjourn. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Meeting adjourned.

Reviewed and accepted this 4 day of November, 2025

David Lenkensdofer

David Lenkensdofer

Larry Preston

Larry Preston

Beverly Fields

Beverly Fields

Greg Cheesman

Greg Cheesman

Mike Stine

Mike Stine

Todd Holaday

Todd Holaday

Scott Fisher

Scott Fisher

ATTESTED:

Laura J. Martin

Laura J. Martin, Auditor

