

**June 16, 2025**

The Wabash County Board of Commissioners met in regular session in the Wabash County Courthouse on Monday, June 16, 2025. Chairman Jeff D. Dawes called the meeting to order at 9:00a.m. with Dawes, Tyler Niccum, and Cheryl Ross present. The proceedings were recorded by Wabash County Auditor Shelly Bauccho.

The minutes of the June 2, 2025, meeting was reviewed. Niccum made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Ross seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.

Barbara Amiss, Daughters of American Revolution (DAR) presented that DAR is working on restoring historical markers, having completed the Francis Slocum Cemetery and Camp Wabash markers, and currently working on the Paradise Springs marker. They seek permission to restore the "1st electrically lighted city" marker on the courthouse lawn, which is nearly 60 years old. DAR will provide paint and labor, but they need assistance from the county highway or city street department to remove and reinstall the sign. The commissioners agree to check with the city to ensure they are not overstepping before proceeding with the restoration.

Christine Flohr, Executive Director, Visit Wabash County, presents the organization's achievements and requests continued funding of \$75,000 for 2026. She highlights the significant economic impact generated from tourism, which has increased from \$41.9 million to over \$80 million annually. The organization exceeds the state's annual tourism growth rate by 4.5% and has received numerous awards for their marketing efforts. Visit Wabash County also focuses on population growth through targeted campaigns and mentors over 60 small businesses in the county. Christine emphasizes the organization's role in employee recruitment for major employers and shares testimonials from various community leaders supporting their work.

Cynthia Johnson, Executive Director, Learn More Center provided an update on the adult basic education and lifelong learning hub project. The new building, the Owen Millers Furniture building, is nearly ready for occupancy with 10,000 square feet of classroom labs and meeting spaces. The Learn more Center is working on raising funds for flexible classroom and lab spaces, including movable furniture and digital learning equipment. The organization has received a grant from Ford Meter Box for lab spaces and is partnering with various entities to create a comprehensive learning environment. Cynthia presents the costs and benefits of adult education programs offered by the Learn More Center. She explains that their programs are free for students, with some state funding available for test fees and study materials. The direct cost per student is about \$3,800-\$4,000, but the return on investment is significant, with adult education adding \$35 million to Indiana's economy in 2023-2024. Cynthia requests \$50,000 for the 2026 budget and mentions a projected shortfall of \$145,000 over the next year and a half. She also highlights their successful GED program at the local jail, with recent graduates and plans for expansion.

Teresa Galley, Executive Director of the Wabash County Museum, presents an overview of the museum's achievements and future plans. She highlights the museum's impact, including welcoming over 20,000 guests in 2024, accepting new artifacts, and offering educational programs. Galley discusses upcoming exhibits, the museum's mission, and its role in preserving local history. She requests financial support of \$40,000 from the 2026 budget to help cover operating expenses and programming costs.

Brian Swihart, Chief Probation Officer, requests approval to write a grant for \$61,381 from the Justice Partners Addictions Response Grant for 2026. The grant, which runs from October 1st to September 29th next year, is an advanced grant that will not cost the county anything and will be used to support clients with opioid or substance abuse disorders. The commissioners approve the request to write the grant.

Tyler Guenin, Wabash County Sheriff's Department presented:

1. May, 2025, jail report. Total prison count 126, female prisoners 37, male prisoners 89, 81 prisoners booked in, average number of bookings for the month 80, level 6 felony sentenced females 3, level 6 felony sentenced males 8, 17 prisoners transported, 12 males

June 16, 2025

and 0 females transported to IDOC, DNA collected from arrested felons 22, 1 misdemeanor fingerprints ordered by the Court, and 0 inmate housed outside of the County.

2. Guenin reported ongoing staffing issues at the jail, with approximately 7-8 positions currently unfilled.

Shelly Bauccho, Wabash County Auditor presented:

1. Accounts payable claims and allowances for docket ending 06/09/2025 and 06/16/2025. Niccum made a motion to approve the claims and allowances as presented. Ross seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.
2. Payroll claims and allowances, including withholdings, for pay period ending 06/14/2025. Niccum made a motion to accept the payroll claims, allowances including withholdings. Ross seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.
3. LIT Operating Levy Distribution in the amount of \$1,897,887.95 for approval to disburse to the taxing units. Motion to approve the disbursement made by Niccum. Ross seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.
4. LIT June Monthly Distribution in the amount of \$1,431,323.76 for approval to disburse to the taxing units. Niccum made a motion to approve the LIT June Monthly Distribution. Ross seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.
5. Covered Bridge Certification for Signatures.
6. Settlement Distribution of \$25,695,832.89 for approval to disburse to the taxing units. Niccum motioned to approve the settlement distribution. Ross seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.

Dawes asked if there were any ADA or Title VI concerns.

Dave Terflinger requested improved signage for the Handicap parking at the courthouse and that the floor entering the lobby needs to be smoothed out to prevent a trip hazard.

Ross made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Niccum seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote. The Commissioners will next meet on Monday, July 7, 2025, at 9:00am.

Also present: *In person:* Louella Krom, Cheryl Ridgeway, Kimberly Lundmark, Jennifer Long Dillion, Jennie Reker, Marcie Shepherd, Cole Wyatt, Mark Frantz and Laura Grandstaff. *Via zoom:* Theda Metzger, Don Jervis, Amanda Shambarger, AKline, Kodi Sawin, Susan Kahkarza and CLA.

  
Jeff D. Dawes

  
Tyler Niccum

  
Cheryl Ross

Attest:   
Shelly Bauccho, Wabash County Auditor