

Wabash County Council Minutes for March 16, 2026

The Wabash County Council met in session on Monday, March 16, 2026, in the Commissioner's Meeting Room of the Wabash County Courthouse. Chairman Kyle Bowman called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. All seven council members were present: Kyle Bowman, Nick Kopkey, Matt Dillon, Sam Hann, David Terflinger, Rhett Mast, and Matt Mize. Bowman opened with a prayer and then led the Pledge of Allegiance. The proceedings of the meeting were recorded by Wabash County Auditor Shelly Baucoco.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES

No Council meeting was held in February 2026. Dillon moved to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2026, meeting as presented. Kopkey seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

JCAP PROGRAM UPDATE

Sheriff Ryan Baker and Melissa Campbell, Inmate Service Coordinator, presented an update on the Jail Community Accountability Program (JCAP). Campbell reported that JCAP is a 16-week program with 12 current participants (men and women) attending classes approximately 6–8 hours daily, Monday through Friday. Approximately 30 volunteers assist with classes, including representatives from Bowen Health, Waypoint, and certified recovery specialists. The program is split 50% mental health and addiction classes and 50% life skills. Participants are housed in a dedicated block. The current group is on week 9, and one class has graduated so far.

Terflinger asked whether participants released during the program return to the Jail to complete it. Baker and Campbell indicated no — released participants are given resources for sober living and other programs. Terflinger asked whether the JCAP program is worth continuing. Baker stated it is still a work in progress but he believes it is worth continuing. Campbell stated she is seeing positive changes in participants and feels strongly it is worth continuing.

No action was taken. Informational only.

CFC ABATEMENT COMPLIANCE

Deanna Schuler, representing CFC, presented the annual abatement compliance report. Schuler indicated that the annual compliance paperwork has been submitted to the Auditor. Bowman noted that as part of the process, the Council reviews compliance annually. Tenille Zartman, Grow Wabash County, reported that CFC has exceeded expectations, is up six employees, and payroll has increased significantly. Zartman confirmed that CFC has over \$2 million in personal property and remains eligible for the abatement.

Terflinger asked whether the Council had received any direction from recent Senate legislation regarding changes to abatement parameters. Zartman indicated that CFC remains eligible.

Terflinger moved to accept the abatement compliance. Dillon seconded. Motion carried 6-0-1 (Kopkey abstained).

Terflinger asked Zartman whether the incentive scorecard had been updated and presented for Council approval. Zartman indicated the scorecard had been approved by the Incentive Review Committee and that the Council's role is guidance rather than formal approval or denial. She indicated the requested changes have been made and she will email the updated form to Council members for review.

Reappointment of two Redevelopment Commission members, Lisa Gillman and Roger Cromer, for a one-year term. Dillon made a motion to approve the reappointment. Hann seconded the motion; it passed by a 6-0-1 (abstain Terflinger) vote.

REAPPOINTMENT OF REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEMBERS

Bowman presented the reappointment of Lisa Gillman and Roger Cromer to the Wabash County Redevelopment Commission for one-year terms.

Dillon moved to approve the reappointments. Hann seconded. Motion carried 6-0-1 (Terflinger abstained).

PURDUE EXTENSION — NEW OFFICE AND EDUCATION CENTER

Geoff Schortgen and Blake Huston, Purdue Extension, requested permission to initiate the planning phase for a new Purdue Extension Wabash County Office and Education Community Center at the Wabash County Fairgrounds. They clarified they are requesting permission to pursue grants and develop plans only — no funding is being requested at this time.

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Schortgen reported that 808 Manchester Avenue was considered but does not fit the program's needs due to the open floor plan and lack of individual office space. Huston stated the preferred location is the site of the former county lean-to (demolished several years ago), adjacent to the Bruce Ingram building, on land owned by the County Commissioners.

Terflinger expressed concerns about the funding structure, noting that Purdue is not contributing to construction or ongoing maintenance costs, and suggested the request may be premature. Mast asked about existing heated buildings at the Fairgrounds and questioned the need for a third building. Huston noted that one building is owned by Farm Bureau and another is leased to the Fair Association. Baucoco confirmed the County does not pay that lease. Huston noted the 4-H Council pays \$12,500 per year for use of the Bruce Ingram building, and the Fair Association limits its usage.

Dillon asked about the criteria for rejecting the 808 Manchester property. Schortgen explained the open layout does not suit the program's need for individual offices. Hann asked whether offices added to 808 would meet their needs; Schortgen indicated they need to be selective about the space. Hann asked whether the goal was a facility like Miami County's, and Huston confirmed.

Mize noted this has been discussed for years and having a larger space at the Fairgrounds would be convenient. Mast indicated he is not opposed to getting numbers. Terflinger suggested tabling until other options, including the future return of the Animal Shelter property, could be explored.

It was decided that Terflinger and Kopkey would serve on a committee if one is formed to investigate building options.

Kopkey moved to approve Purdue Extension exploring funding options, with no monies to be received — gathering information only. Terflinger seconded. Motion carried 5-2 (Dillon and Bowman voted nay)

TRANSFER RESOLUTION 2026-85-04

TRANSFER RESOLUTION 2026-85-04(a) - General Fund #1000 — Purdue Extension

Purdue Extension requested a transfer of \$1,175 from Office Supplies to Leases/Service Contracts to cover the costs of upgrading their copier.

Terflinger moved to approve the transfer. Dillon seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

TRANSFER RESOLUTION 2026-85-04(b) - Opioid Unrestricted Fund #1238

Transfer of \$6,525 from Professional Services to Office Renovations to cover the expense of a door installation at 79 W. Main Street.

Terflinger moved to approve the transfer. Dillon seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Mast asked about the threshold for obtaining multiple quotes. Mark Frantz indicated that for goods and equipment, the threshold is \$50,000, and amounts over \$150,000 must be formally bid.

ORDINANCE 2026-85-02 Additional Appropriations

LIT Public Safety (1170) – \$127,690

Bowman indicated that LIT Public Safety has a variety of functions and noted that every other year, a large amount comes out of LIT Public Safety to fund debt services on the new Jail. The Sheriff indicated they were leasing vehicles and were trying to stop leasing; however, it may be necessary to lease. Typically, the Sheriff budgets \$150,000 each year for new vehicles. The Sheriff indicated that per a phone call with Terflinger, he indicated that the Council prohibited the Sheriff from any further leasing and the Sheriff wanted clarification of it. Terflinger indicated that it was said in a meeting sometime last year. Bowman indicated that he did not recall strictly prohibiting the Sheriff from leasing; however, he remembers trying to discourage the Sheriff from leasing. The Sheriff indicated that after they pay off the current leases that they have, they will be left with \$65,711. With the three new vehicles that he is requesting to purchase, and then adding a 4th upon the suggestion of Terflinger for a vehicle with a removable K9 cage in it, so the K9 officers are not without vehicles. The additional covers the cost of three plus the fourth, per Terflinger's recommendation. He presented information for a removable dog cage in the amount of \$1,579.00. Terflinger indicated that he is the budget liaison with the Sheriff and the Chief Deputy and the \$65,000 in the Motor Vehicles and \$49,486 in Vehicle Outfitting, he wanted to make a motion to combine those two so that the Sheriff could proceed with getting quotes for two

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vehicles. It would leave a total of \$114,000 for two vehicles. The Sheriff indicated that Durango's are \$44,000 a piece plus additional outfitting. Bauccho reported that currently the Sheriff has \$112,999 left in Motor Vehicles and all but \$65,711 is committed. The Sheriff indicated that he does not remember committing to only purchasing two vehicles in this year's budget and that he typically budgets purchasing three vehicles each year. Mast asked how many vehicles they will be losing to mileage in 2026. The Sheriff did not have the exact number but reported they have a few that are getting high in mileage. Mize indicated that the Sheriff is purchasing Dodge vehicles like the State Police and wondered if there was a benefit that they could take advantage with the State Police. The Sheriff indicated that there is currently no QPA or State Bid on vehicles currently. Terflinger indicated that he differs with the Sheriff on that and has a presentation after the vote.

TRANSFER RESOLUTION 2026-85-05 LIT Public Safety Fund #1170 — Vehicle Line-Item Consolidation

Prior to acting on the additional appropriation, Terflinger moved to combine the Vehicle Outfitting and Motor Vehicles line items within the LIT Public Safety Fund, which functions as a transfer rather than an additional appropriation.

Terflinger moved to approve Transfer Resolution 2026-85-05. Bowman seconded. Motion carried 5-2 (Hann and Dillon voted nay).

In regards to the Additional Appropriation, Terflinger reached out to a gentleman by the name of Oliver, who is the Director of Fleet Services for the State of Indiana. He has done comparisons of vehicles. There is a Fleet Identity Number that any political subdivision could apply for. That municipality can request a FIN with each individual manufacture. So, if the Sheriff wants Dodges, he would just reach out to get one, or if he wants to do a comparison, he is able to do that. Terflinger indicated that there is a discount and the State is working on a contract with all three and if they get it worked out it will be available to all political subdivisions. Basically, Wabash County could call up and get a number for all three and when they are ready to purchase, the County would get the discount with whatever dealer. Dillon asked what the difference in costs would be. Terflinger did not have that information. Hann noted that he did not want to short the Sheriff's Dept. of getting new cars. Terflinger noted that he would like to get a Fleet Manager Matrix in place and stated that there are dozens of them out there. He then went on to describe how the matrix system works. Terflinger feels like if everyone keeps working together that a better way to purchase cars could be met. Mize asked how long it would take to get the new vehicles. The Sheriff indicated that if a check was cut tomorrow, he would have the vehicles the same day.

Hann made a motion to approve the additional appropriation as advertised. Mast seconded the motion. Terflinger indicated he does not feel like a 4th vehicle is needed at this time which the Sheriff said he put in there at the recommendation of Terflinger. Dillon suggested doing an additional appropriation for an additional vehicle and then start a process to get some kind of matrix in place.

Hann amended his motion to the purchase of three vehicles with outfitting making the additional amount of \$60,000 in Motor Vehicles. Mast seconded the motion; it passed by a 7-0 vote. The additional appropriation was approved in the amount of \$60,000 for Motor Vehicles in LIT Public Safety Fund (1170.40430.000.0000). The original advertised amount of \$127,690 was reduced by the Council to \$60,000. Mize noted that before another vehicle is purchased, he would like to see some kind of maintenance program put into place.

Adult User Fee Fund - \$33,480

Bauccho noted that this is Probation User Fees where they received a grant for partial funding a probation officer with the remaining to come from user fees. Hann made a motion to approve the request. Bowman seconded the motion; it passed by a 6-1 (Dillon) vote.

Misdemeanor Data Collection - \$5,200

Bauccho indicated that this is the misdemeanor fund for the Public Defenders and the County signed up for the misdemeanor pilot program. As a part of the program, after the bill is paid, the Public Defenders petition the state and get 40% back and would like to pay Teresa Newman her services from 2025. Terflinger noted that he did not like the part where someone besides the Council made the decision on what to pay her but since she has already done the work, he would make the motion to approve the Additional Appropriation. Dillon seconded the motion; it passed by 5-2 (Mize and Mast) vote.

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Employee Classification Change Requests

Commissioner Niccum wanted to know if this was in regards to the two maintenance positions and Bowman indicated that it was. Niccum noted that they have polled the surrounding counties in what their head maintenance employee earns and noted that Wabash County is lower in wages. Niccum said that Marcie Shepherd had sent an e-mail with information on what was going on with this position. Niccum indicated they have had 17 applications for the maintenance position at the Jail and 2 of them were contacted for interviews by email and no response was received. Niccum believes the salary for the position is low. He noted that if they raised the salary then that person would be making close to what the maintenance supervisor salary is and they are requesting to raise that salary as well. Niccum believes that the original job classification for the maintenance supervisor was generic and across the board and not accurate. Niccum noted that the maintenance team for Wabash County does a phenomenal job; however, one will be going out on medical leave, and the County will be down one maintenance position and will be depending on the two custodians. Dawes then backed up Niccum in saying the Commissioners feel that there should be an increase to the salary. Niccum noted they would like to keep good employees and they feel raising the salary will do this.

Terflinger indicated that he is on the PAC committee and noted that Addie Rooker, with Waggoner, Irwin, Steele & Associates indicated that the job descriptions needed updated. Terflinger reported the PAC committee tabled it until the job descriptions were updated to reflect what the Commissioners are now saying is the correct duties. Terflinger said it was reported that there is overlap of two positions with the change in the job description and it needs to be addressed before any action should be taken.

Terflinger made a motion to send this to an executive session before the next meeting since it a personnel issue, and noted that maybe by then the job descriptions will be corrected. Mast asked if the employee will work at the Jail as a maintenance tech and feels that since he works in this field, and stated that he assures the Council that the position is at least at scale and does not agree with the increase. He indicated that if the salary was increased for the maintenance supervisor that he would be the highest paid facilities maintenance in the County. Terflinger indicated that he is uncomfortable discussing job performance in an open meeting. Mast noted that he is not talking about the performance and discussing salary only. Terflinger made a motion again to table the discussion until they have an executive session. Hann seconded the motion; it passed by a 7-0 vote. It was noted the executive session will be at 5:00pm on April 20, 2026.

Next, Bowman noted a position at the Highway needed to be updated. Bauccho indicated that as they Highway Superintendent has requested to move the Foreman position down to a Mechanic position. Terflinger made the motion to approve the position change. Dillon seconded the motion; it passed by a 7-0 vote.

Bauccho reported they are still looking at software for the Auditor, Assessor, Treasurer and Surveyor, and they are hoping to meet soon.

Niccum wanted to give a heads-up to the Council that in next year's budget they will be looking at adding a camera/locater/depth finder all in one for the Surveyor's Office. They feel it will be cost effective to have their own camera.

The Council reviewed the following items: Auditor and Treasurer reports for January and February, 2026; Sheriff's Commissary Fund report for January, 2026; the Solid Waste Management Report for January, 2026; Visit Wabash County Letter; Community Foundation of Wabash County Letter; North Manchester Center for History Letter; and The Learn More Center Annual Grant Report.

With no other business to come before the Council, Dillon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:49p.m; Hann seconded. Chairman Bowman adjourned the meeting. The next scheduled meeting of the Wabash County Council is Monday, April 20, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. There will be an Executive Session before the meeting at 5:00pm.

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The following individuals also attended the County Council meeting:

**If any names are spelled incorrectly, we apologize.*

Cheryl Ridgeway, Brian Ridgeway, Brad Rody, Brenda Hegel, Ashley Frehse, Cheryl Ross, Ken Brown, Jeff Dawes, and Teresa Rody. Via Zoom: Nicky B, Rich Mofield, Laura Grandstaff, M, and Mason.



Kyle Bowman, Chairman



Matthew Mize, Vice-Chairman


Sam Hann



Matt Dillon



Nick Kopkey



Rhett Mast



David Terflinger

Attest:



Shelly Bauccho, Wabash County Auditor