

Wabash County Council Minutes for April 20, 2026

The Wabash County Council met in session on Monday, April 20, 2026, in the Commissioner's Meeting Room of the Wabash County Courthouse. Chairman Kyle Bowman called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Six council members were present: Kyle Bowman, Nick Kopkey, Matt Dillon, David Terflinger, Rhett Mast, and Matt Mize. Sam Hann was absent. Mize opened with a prayer and then led the Pledge of Allegiance. The proceedings of the meeting were recorded by Wabash County Auditor Shelly Bauccho.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Prior to the regular meeting, the Council held an executive session from 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-6.1(b)(3) regarding employee job performance evaluation related to compensation and classification. No official action was taken during the executive session.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES

Dillon moved to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2026, meeting as presented. Terflinger seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

ABATEMENT – ANNUAL CF-1 COMPLIANCE

Tenille Zartman, Grow Wabash County, presented the annual CF-1 compliance for Custom Cartons. The abatement for Custom Cartons started in 2019 for a piece of equipment. Zartman noted that she went to the facility recently to make sure the equipment was still there and operational. The abatement is for research and development for a piece of equipment they purchased in 2019. Zartman noted that according to the CF-1 compliance form there was only one number that was out of range was that they estimated 25 retained employees but they are currently at 22 and indicated that they would get back to the original number and that they are currently hiring. Zartman recommended approval of the compliance. Terflinger asked how many more years they had and Zartman stated it is a 10-year abatement with three more years left.

Mize made a motion to approve the CF-1 compliance for Custom Cartons. Dillon seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-2 (Mast and Terflinger voted nay).

Colt Burnau from Heartland REMC presented the annual CF-1 compliance for Heartland REMC and Heartland Hi-Speed Fiber. He noted that April 1, 2026, Heartland Hi-Speed Fiber took effect and all of the fiber customers are in-house and they have hired an additional 7 employees and looking to hire another 2-5 employees. He reported they are expanding and growing. Kopkey asked Zartman what sort of accountability and compliance does she do for Heartland REMC. She stated that for Heartland it is just investment done and that utilities can have a special tax abatement and that she has been working rather closely since April 1, 2026, to get a build-out to areas that are not served. Mize asked if they have had any luck with Duke Energy and he noted that they will be going underground. He stated they are going to continue to build-out based on customer demand. Burnau reported that they are looking at a \$10-12 million construction work plan on the electric side and a \$3-5 million on the fiber. Terflinger asked how many miles does \$3-5 million cover. Burnau said it depended on if it was overhead or underground. Terflinger noted that most of the areas in Chester Township are Duke Energy so it would be need to be underground and Burnau stated that the price could triple for underground. Burnau reported that it could cost \$100,000 per mile. Terflinger stated that he lives in Pleasant Township and Frontier has been putting fiber in and should be up and running before July 1, and they are running deals of \$60/month for two (2) years and wanted to know why they didn't come for an abatement. Burnau stated that Heartland REMC is a small, local ISP and cannot compete with the nationwide companies that are getting money from the federal government. Terflinger asked if they got any of the BEAD money and Burnau indicated that they fought to get \$13.2 million, and are invested currently for over \$105 million and greatly appreciates all the help they can get. Terflinger asked how many years the abatement was for and it was stated that it is for 10-years. Terflinger asked Zartman if they qualified under the scorecard for 10-years and Zartman noted that when they first applied, yes; however, this is just for compliance. Terflinger then asked Burnau if they will be getting the BEAD money every year and Burnau noted that no, they will not be getting anymore BEAD money.

Dillon made a motion to approve the CF-1 for Heartland REMC. Kopkey seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-1-1 (Mast – Nay) (Terflinger – Abstained).

CERTIFICATE OF APPOINTMENT

Bowman presented the reappointment of Tim Brauch to the North Manchester Library Board.

Terflinger moved to approve the reappointment. Dillon seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

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TRANSFER RESOLUTION 2026-85-06

TRANSFER RESOLUTION 2026-85-06 – Cumulative Bridge Fund

Highway requested a transfer of \$94,000 from Bridge #652 Construction to Bridge #652 Design to cover the cost of the Construction Engineering.

Terflinger moved to approve the transfer. Dillon seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

ORDINANCE 2026-85-04 Additional Appropriations

LIT Public Safety (1170) – \$70,000

Baucco noted the Sheriff only budgeted \$50,000 last year and the Council cut some of that. After the Sheriff has been in the building for almost two (2) years, they are discovering things that need to be repaired. He is asking for additional funds for some projects that are ongoing and some potential other repairs that he foresees.

Terflinger made a motion to approve an additional appropriation of \$34,148 (\$29,148 for known repairs plus \$5,000 for potential other repairs). Bowman asked Terflinger to consider amending his motion to an even \$35,000. Terflinger amended his motion to approve an additional appropriation of \$35,000. Dillon seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0. The additional appropriation was approved in the amount of \$35,000 for LIT Public Safety (1170). The original advertised amount of \$70,000 was reduced by the Council to \$35,000.

Terflinger asked the Commissioners if the skylights leaked before or after the new roof and Dawes indicated that both. Dillon noted that why he seconded the motion was that he didn't believe that it was outside of the range to have good well-documented reasons why the requests are being made so that they just don't have potential other repairs line item and feels they are being good stewards of the money and noted that the Sheriff can come back anytime to ask for more money. Terflinger stated that he has been told that there is problem with the insulation and there are issues with the windows. Ross stated that she believes that there is only one cell with a leak at this time.

GRANT REQUEST – SHERIFF'S CHIRP 2027 GRANT APPLICATION

Baucco noted that this is an annual grant that the Sheriff's Department does. It is a federal grant and is reimbursable. She noted the Commissioners approved the Grant Application at their morning meeting.

Dillon made a motion to approve the grant application. Mize seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0-1 (Terflinger abstained)

JUSTICE PARTNERS ADDICTION GRANT STIPEND APPROVAL REQUEST: PROBATION

Baucco noted that this another federal grant from the Indiana Office of Court Services for the Justice Partners Addiction Grant. The grant was approved by the Commissioners and part of the budgeting is that they are allowing a FRC Coordinator stipends. They are allowing two Stipends one for Kimberly Lundmark, (\$9,325.00) and for Brian Swihart (\$4,325.00), which would be funded thru the Grant. Terflinger asked what an FRC was and Baucco stated it is Family Recovery Court and asked what Brian was actually requesting. Baucco stated he is asking as it would be an amendment to the salary ordinance. Mize stated that if the grant is gone the stipend is gone. Baucco reported they were going to use the money for Recovery Court coaches according to the email provided by Brian, but there aren't any available. The grant administrator said Probation could move the money into the coordinators spot for stipends instead of sending the money back. Mast asked if the grant was going to give someone the money but there was no one in that position so they want to give it to Kimberly and Brian instead. Baucco stated that was her understanding and she was unsure if they would be picking up more responsibility with the stipend. Bowman asked if they are filling in the gaps for not having recovery coaches. Mast asked if this could be tabled until they can explain what they are doing to earn the stipend.

Terflinger made a motion to table the request. Mast seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

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OLD BUSINESS – CLASSIFICATION REVIEW

Bowman noted that there was an Executive Session prior to the Council meeting and no decisions can be made at executive sessions, only information presented and discussions to be had. Bowman asked if there were any motions regarding the maintenance positions. Mast made a motion to keep things the way they are currently. Terflinger seconded the motion. Mize noted that he feels that the Commissioners need to get a better plan of what are the Maintenance/Custodial needs and what skill sets are needed to meet those needs. He stated they are currently down one, another is retiring and the other one is borderline and the one that is the main part of the conversation is currently out but the job is still managing to get done. Mize would like a better idea on what the need is for a maintenance/custodial perspective and how to best structure the staff to get the needs accomplished. He doesn't feel they can give compensation if they don't know what the tasks are being accomplished and the job description, he is being told, does not match the tasks and skills that are needed. Mast stated that he is not a fan giving raises in the middle of the year and feels that they will be opening a can of worms. Bowman noted that the Council, as Mize discussed, ahead of budget this year to have a plan and knowing what the needs are and how the hierarchy works as far as what are the hours needed, and where are they expected to be. Mize noted that they are wanting to make an informed decision and looking at the wage study, they believe that the compensation is there currently. Motion carried 6-0.

Bowman then noted they discussed the coroner position and whether it was adequate to make it full-time going forward with attached benefits. Mast made a motion to make no change to the current structure. Mize seconded the motion. Terflinger noted that he feels like the position should be looked at during budgets for 2027 and/or when the position comes up for election again. Mize said he would like to see what is the time requirement that is happening with the position and he realizes that he is on call but would like to see how many hours and days he is actually putting in hours. Ross noted that she spoke with the coroner and reported that he does about a 140 cases per year and that some of those, depending on the situation, are more entailed and takes approximately 6 hours for each death. Dillon did the figures and believes that he is averaging 16 hours per week. Bowman noted that it is a similar situation as before and not wanting to make changes in the middle of the year, as well as being an elected official and knowing what the benefits were going into it. The Council would like a better understanding of his requirements and would consider an adjustment going into the election. Bowman noted this by no means makes a statement on how they feel the coroner is doing as he thinks he is doing an outstanding job. Bowman stated they are trying to disassociate the person and personality from the classification. Terflinger wanted to make a statement that they took the personalities out of it and are looking at the positions going forward. Motion carried 6-0.

REVIEW ITEMS:

The Council reviewed the following items: Auditor and Treasurer reports for March, 2026; Wabash County Sheriff's Report of Commissary Fund for February and March, 2026; North Manchester RDC Notice of Public Hearing on May 13, 2026, at 5:00pm at the Town Hall.

Baucco reported that she has received quotes from LOW and X-Soft for new software and noted it would be wonderful to have new software but they have not had a chance to meet. She noted that there have been so many software glitches with the new SB1 and all the homestead and deduction changes. She noted it was trouble to get the abstract done and heard some of the problems that have been had would not have happened with a different software vendor.

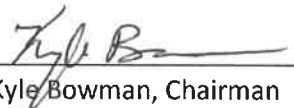
With no other business to come before the Council, Dillon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chairman Bowman adjourned the meeting. The next scheduled meeting of the Wabash County Council is Monday, May 18, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

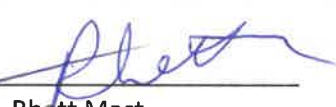
The following individuals also attended the County Council meeting:

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

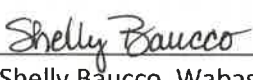
Nicky Burnsworth and Jim Dixon. Via Zoom: Connie, iPhone (2), Rich Mofield, Tyler Niccum, and CAR.

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 _____ Kyle Bowman, Chairman	 _____ Matthew Mize, Vice-Chairman	_____ Sam Hann
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_____ Matt Dillon	 _____ Nick Kopkey	 _____ Rhett Mast
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 _____ David Terflinger
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Attest: 

Shelly Bauccho, Wabash County Auditor