

Wabash County Council Minutes for June 15, 2026

Regular Meeting Minutes

June 15, 2026 | 6:00 PM | Commissioner's Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, Wabash County Courthouse

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kyle Bowman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Chairman Bowman opened with a prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance. The proceedings of the meeting were recorded by Wabash County Auditor Shelly Bauccho.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kyle Bowman, Nick Kopkey, Sam Hann, David Terflinger, Rhett Mast, and Matt Mize

MEMBERS ABSENT: Matt Dillon

ALSO PRESENT: Mark Frantz, Ryan Baker, Nicole Howard, Kyle Sparks, Tenille Zartman, Matt Street, Cheri Slee, Brenda Hegel, Dean White, Richard Palmer, Christine Flohr, Scott Stephens, Blake Huston, Lucas Hauptert, Andrew Adamiec, Rachel Eppard, Mariah Underwood, Jamie Keaffaber, Sidney Mize, Brad Rody, Jim Dixon, Geoff Schortgen, Dennis Greer, J. Thompson, Cindi Younce, Ryan Hauptert, Dan Krouse, Tent Hoppes

VIA ZOOM: Laura Grandstaff, Doug Mays, Rich Mofield, and CAR

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES

Terflinger moved to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2026, meeting as presented. Hann seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

NEW BUSINESS

MPS EGG FARMS; CF-1 COMPLIANCE REVIEW

Tenille Zartman, Grow Wabash County, and Dan Krouse, MPS Egg Farms, presented updates on the CF-1 compliance for MPS Egg Farms. They have retained and exceeded the number of employees and salaries that they expected to achieve. The sales of fertilizer generated more revenue than anticipated, and the abatement has been helpful for the company. Terflinger asked if the manure and fertilizer are still sold to farmers, noting his belief that most is being sold to the bio-nutrient plant in the city. Krouse responded that product is still sold to farmers and that the same amount of manure is being produced and spread as before. Bowman asked what percentage of production is sold to the bio-nutrient plant. Krouse responded that approximately one quarter of production is sold to the bio-nutrient plant, with the remainder sold to farmers or residents of Wabash County, and that more will go to the plant as it becomes more efficient. Terflinger referenced a news article regarding the city's joint venture with MPS Eggs involving bio-nutrients. Krouse stated there is no tax abatement on the bio-nutrient plant. Zartman confirmed there is no tax abatement. Bauccho confirmed that the bio-nutrient plant pays property taxes. Terflinger made a motion to table the CF-1 compliance approval for MPS Egg Farms to allow Zartman to investigate further. The motion died for lack of a second.

Mize made a motion to approve the CF-1 compliance for MPS Egg Farms. Hann seconded. Motion failed 2-3-1 (Mast, Bowman, and Terflinger voted nay; Kopkey abstained).

Bowman asked Zartman to consult legal counsel regarding next steps.

PROBATION-GRANT STIPEND REQUEST

Brian Swihart, Chief Probation Officer, explained the process of managing grant funds. He noted that grant funds are separate from county funds and do not follow the standard January-to-January cycle. The first grant totals \$10,542, split between two employees. The second grant totals \$15,000, divided among three employees.

Terflinger moved to approve the grants for Probation. Mast seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

VISIT WABASH COUNTY, 2027 FUNDING REQUEST

Christine Flohr, Visit Wabash County, presented an annual report highlighting economic impact, marketing efforts, and new initiatives including the Thriving Wabash County podcast. She requested continued funding of \$75,000 for 2027 with no increase from the prior year. The Council received the presentation. No action was taken at this time.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Bauccho reported that the upcoming health insurance renewal is projected to include a rate increase of 5-10%. Current employee-only coverage costs approximately \$19,000 annually; family plan coverage

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costs up to \$34,000. The Council discussed exploring alternative insurance providers and pricing options before the April renewal deadline as potential leverage for better rates. No action was taken.

ORDINANCE 2026-85-05 Additional Appropriations

County Health (1159), Outside Legal Counsel, \$30,000

Mark Frantz, County Attorney, presented on behalf of Rich Mofield requesting approval of an additional appropriation of \$30,000 for outside legal counsel related to a lawsuit against the Health Department. He noted the Board of Commissioners approved the request the same morning.

Terflinger moved to approve the additional appropriation of \$30,000. Mast seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Bowman reported an anticipated retirement in the Health Department and raised the question of funding two weeks of salary overlap for the same position. Bowman asked the Council's thoughts on funding two weeks of overlapping salary for the same position. The Council indicated they would be supportive of funding the two-week salary overlap when a formal request is brought forward, but no motion was made at this meeting.

COUNTY GENERAL (1000-034) Public Defender - \$34,700.00

Baucco reported that when the Public Defender Board hired their new employee, the employee chose to enroll in county health care coverage. An additional appropriation of \$34,700 is needed to fund the associated costs.

Mize made a motion to approve the additional appropriation. Kopkey seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

OLD BUSINESS

SOFTWARE VENDOR REVIEW

Scott Stephens and Ryan Baker from XSoft presented a proposal to implement integrated property tax and assessment software across multiple county offices. The proposed one-time fee is \$204,500 spread over three years, with an annual maintenance fee of \$36,850. The data conversion fee was waived given Wabash County's existing use of XSoft assessment software. The proposed implementation timeline runs from mid-December through mid-February. Neighboring counties including Miami, Huntington, and Marshall have implemented similar systems.

The Council discussed concerns regarding ongoing maintenance costs and the efficiency gains of consolidating from three separate software systems to a single vendor solution. The Council received the presentation. Baucco will conduct follow-up research and report back to the Council at a future meeting.

PURDUE EXTENSION/INDIANA 4-H AND THE WABASH COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

Kopkey opened with a statement that no changes will take effect for the 2026 fair year. The conversation then shifted to the relationship between the 4-H Council and the Fair Board. Brad Rody represented the 4-H Council, explaining their current limitations under the existing MOU and highlighting challenges with facility usage and organizational changes. Dean White from the Fair Board shared concerns about past decisions regarding extension leadership and safety issues with electrical facilities at the fairgrounds. The Fair Board noted that they have been responsible for maintaining and upgrading the facility for 15-16 years, including paying for water, sewage, insurance, and electricity, as well as installing a new sound system for \$35,000. The Fair Board generates revenue through a one-week fair and various fundraising activities, including the Ribbons of Support program and community donations. Hann noted that while the two entities operate separately, better communication could be achieved through liaison members attending each other's meetings. Schortgen, with Purdue Extension, stated there will be a 4-H presence in Wabash County. Bill Herana will serve as Purdue Extension's new lead, and Schortgen plans to bring him to a future meeting. The Council requested annual financial statements from both parties going forward. Mize suggested obtaining outside counsel to help resolve control, funding, and operational issues between the 4-H Council, Fair Board, and Purdue Extension.

Terflinger made a motion to suspend all fundraising on a new building until the matter is resolved. Bowman seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Bowman moved to obtain outside legal counsel to provide a clear determination of ownership and operational responsibilities. Terflinger seconded. Motion carried 5-1 (Hann abstained).

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COST-OF-LIVING RAISE, 2027 BUDGET PLANNING

Baucco requested consideration of a 3% cost-of-living raise for the 2027 budget year. The Council directed Baucco to instruct department heads to budget for a 3% cost-of-living increase when preparing their 2027 budget submissions.

REVIEW ITEMS

The Council reviewed the following items: Auditor and Treasurer reports for April and May, 2026; Wabash County Sheriff's Report of Commissary Fund for April and May, 2026; Wabash County Solid Waste Management for February, March, and April, 2026; Notice Wabash RDC Annual; Request for Short-Term Disability.

ADJOURNMENT

Terflinger moved to adjourn the meeting. Kopkey seconded. Chairman Bowman adjourned the meeting. The next scheduled meeting of the Wabash County Council is Monday, July 20, 2026, at 6:00 PM.

Kyle Bowman, Chairman

Matthew Mize, Vice-Chairman

Sam Hann

Matt Dillon

Nick Kopkey

Rhett Mast

David Terflinger

Attest: _____

Shelly Baucco

Shelly Baucco, Wabash County Auditor