

JULY 30, 2025

The Jay County Commissioners met in session on Wednesday, July 30th, 2025 at 9:00. a.m. in the courthouse auditorium. Attending was Doug Horn, auditor Emily Franks, and Chad Aker, president, presiding. Attending virtually was commissioner Duane Monroe and attorney Wes Schemenaur. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the minutes from July 21st, 2025. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

LIFESTREAM SERVICES

Kevin DeCamp, project manager, came to the commissioners for approval of their quarterly claim in the amount of \$290,012. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the claim. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was had with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote. Mr. DeCamp presented the commissioners with the corporate partner award in commemoration of their 50th anniversary.

REGIONAL ARTS MASTER PLAN

Carolyn Carducci, Executive Director Arts Place, presented commissioners with the Jay County Arts & Culture Master Plan 2025-2035. The county previously gave \$15,000 as a match for the “Our Town” grant through the National Endowment for the Arts. A plan was created for Blackford, Jay and Auglaize Counties. The Blackford and Jay County plans will feed into the East Central Indiana Regional Arts & Cultural plan as part of READI Arts Initiative. The plan funded the creation of portable “art studios”, that can be rented, and allow visual representation of art in the community. It is recommended that Arts Place and Purdue Extension lead the effort moving forward.

ASSESSOR OVERNIGHT TRAVEL

Robin Alberson, assessor, requested permission for overnight travel for their upcoming certification classes in August. They will be staying at Fort Wayne which is inside the 100-mile overnight travel policy. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the overnight travel to Fort Wayne for their training. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye, and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

ANIMAL CONTROL

Representatives from the Jay County Humane Society came to commissioners to give them an update on operations ahead of the 2026 animal control contract with the county. They have taken in 330 animals last year with 176 coming from the unincorporated areas of Jay County. There was a total of 214 adopted, with 61 returned to the owner and the rest remaining in the shelter. They currently have received a total of 123 animals in the shelter, 56% of those are from the unincorporated areas, but fluctuates daily. The contract included a 10% increase over the current year to \$75,146, citing a large increase in vet expenses. They have budgeted \$52,000 just for veterinary expenses in 2025.

Chad Aker expressed some concerns from the Jay County Sheriff regarding response to calls. They explained if the animal is not there when they arrive, they do look and try to set up traps. However, after hours calls are emergency only as defined in their contract. Their previous requests for funding have been lower than needed to house and meet state guidelines before adoption. It is estimated they will spend in excess of \$280,000 for the year with only Portland also having contract. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the contract pending review from the county attorney. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

ROADWAY ISSUE

Adam Kessler and Chris Bell came to the commissioners to discuss options for increased awareness at 700 E and Indiana SR 26. They would like to see either a flashing stop sign or additional stop ahead signs added to the intersection. Pictures of the intersection were provided to commissioners for review. Mr. Aker explained the county did not have jurisdiction over the intersection as a state highway. However, he will be meeting with the state in the next week and will mention it to them and add it as part of the Safer Streets for All grant.

JAY COUNTY COUNTRY LIVING

Cindy Bracy, JCCL Advisory Board of Directors President, came to the commissioners to give a monthly update on operations. There are currently 16 residents at the facility with 4 or 5 not meeting the skill level required for care. Mrs. Bracy reported 2nd Harvest has not been as successfully as they had hoped for their meal budget. They would like to switch LP gas providers to AgBest, used by the county highway. The summer price would be \$1.20 with the price being \$1.50 throughout the rest of the year. They are currently paying around \$2 per gallon and would like to be added to the county highway contract. Mr. Aker asked they not be locked into a contract moving forward, due to pricing.

A discussion was had over whether persons should still be admitted to the facility. While they have had a few inquiries, none have met the standards for living at the facility. It was decided to wait until the joint session on August 13th for more direction. When asked if all residents were paying, Mrs. Bracy explained one resident was in the process of being evicted for lack of payment.

JEMS

Gary Barnett and Kyle Gerlach, shift supervisors, came to the commissioners meeting to discuss monthly operations. Mr. Barnett provided financials to the commissioners from June 2025. The cost of employees, benefits and supplies have all increased with them receiving the same amount of income. Mr. Aker explained the department provided a service to the county with Mr. Horn agreeing as long as the department was running efficiently.

Mr. Barnett questioned who would pay for items after a recent inspection by the county's insurance. Mr. Aker asked the department receive quotes for the items and return to the commissioners. Courthouse security and EMA had approached the department about installing defibrillators in each floor of the courthouse for a total cost of \$1,500. This would be to purchase new batteries for two extra devices with the cost of purchasing new at \$2,000 apiece. Courthouse employees will then be trained on CPR and AED before installation. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the purchase out of Cum Cap and approve the claim to Boundtree. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was had with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye, and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

A claim to ESO Solutions Inc for the Hand Tevy system in the amount of \$406.85 was presented for commissioner approval. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the claim as presented. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was had with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye, and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

GIS SEED GRANT

Samantha Rhodahamel, EMA director, and Emily Franks, auditor, came to the commissioner to discuss the GIS Seed Grant through the Indiana Geographic Information Office (GIO). The grant allows up to \$30,000 to assist counties in improving centerline data, street names, address point data, and parcel data. There are two companies that can complete the work Abommarche and Schneider Geospatial both offering a contract for \$30,000. The county will need to decide on a vendor to move forward in the grant application. Ms. Franks would like to complete the work through Schneider Geospatial as they are already the county's GIS provider. The contract will not need to be signed until the grant is awarded. Doug Horn made a motion to move forward with Schneider Geospatial. Duane Monroe seconded the

motion. A roll call vote was conducted with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye, and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC SAFETY RADIO SYSTEM

Barry Ritter, owner Ritter Strategic Services, attended the meeting virtually to update commissioners on the request for proposals for the radio system. The proposals were for a unified, interoperable radio system for both public safety and non-public safety communications in the county. The requests were then scored based on coverage and reliability (35%), Reasonableness of Cost (35%), Quality of Product (15%), Warranty and Maintenance (5%), Project Management Approach (5%), and Vendor Qualifications (5%). A list of key evaluation considerations was also given to commissioners. In the final evaluation Motorola scored .96/1.0 or 500/525 points and J&K Communications scored .42/1.0 or 365/525 points.

The total project cost for Motorola was in the range of \$6.6-\$7.1 million. The total project cost for J&K Communications was \$7.9-\$8.3 million and did not include the cost of land purchase. Mr. Ritter asked the commissioners to approve a final recommendation to authorize the county to enter contract negotiations, subject to joint review and appropriation of funds by the county council. Larry "Ray" Newton, sheriff, spoke in favor of moving forward with a system from Motorola, citing their long and reliable history with them. It was clarified the motion would be to move forward with one company and then work on the funding. Duane Monroe made a motion to move forward with Motorola for the radio system. Doug Horn seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye, and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

INSURANCE- MID YEAR REVIEW

Jessica Clayton, Senior Benefits Consultant OneDigital, came to commissioners to give a mid-year review of the county's insurance plans. Mrs. Clayton reviewed resolved issues for the county and gave an overview of claims experience ahead of renewal. She asked commissioners for any input of areas to work on with carriers or current issues with carriers. They already have a note to investigate options for increase dental coverage for employees moving forward.

OWNER OCCUPIED REHAB PROGRAM

Chris Nevel, EGIS, gave a recommendation to the commissioners to award projects for the third and final round of bidding for the OOR Program. The recommendation was to award three properties to Dave's Heating Cooling for a total cost of \$33,198, six properties to Fortitude Consulting, LLC for \$60,663.06, and one to Mustard Seed Remodeling for \$19,926.02. The total cost for all recommendations on the eight homes was \$113,713.08. There is approximately \$5,000 remaining of the grant with 54 homes awarded. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the recommendations from EGIS and to give the commissioner president the authority to sign the contracts with homeowners. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye, and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

ECI REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT

Bill Walters, executive director, came to the commissioners to discuss continuing their contract with the county. The new contract includes the county required language and no increase over the current contract for the community developer position. The contract provides a community developer and engagement with all the small towns. Mr. Walters discussed items they have worked on including: the RFP for the Solid Waste Building & Design, completed trainings, surveys for first and second shift employees, the OOR program, and Safer Streets for All Grant (SS4A), and work on grant applications for Redkey and Dunkirk.

Mr. Aker expressed it had been a good partnership and would like to continue the contract for another two-year term. Mr. Horn questioned what grants they would be applying for in Redkey and Dunkirk. Mr. Walters explained it was for the community crossings grant getting the roads graded and an asset management plan up to date to apply. Redkey is looking at parks and Dunkirk is looking at options for a building. They have started conversations with Norfolk-Southern for grant opportunities and have used their interns to help with various projects. They will be attending trainings to understand the impact of SB-1 with the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) and Economic Development Districts (EDD), with details still unknown.

Mr. Walter discussed the regional focus may be shifting, potentially leading to redrawing regional boundaries, with an emphasis on supporting rural areas. Mr. Aker noted the organization came with grant writers and would allow Jay County Development Corporation (JCDC) from having to hire a third position. Lastly, he noted a 60 day out clause in the contract that would allow the termination before the two-year term. Mr. Walters explained their work with Brownfields, as well as preparation for applying for grants. They have invested roughly \$1 million to obtain \$15 million in grants, and referenced the Safer Streets for All (SS4A) grant currently in the works.

Mr. Monroe explained that he was in support for the region, but was not for supporting the contract for another two-year term. Mr. Monroe then made a motion to not continue the contract with ECI Regional Planning District for another two-year term. Doug Horn seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted with Duane Monroe voting aye, Doug Horn voting aye and Chad Aker voting Nay. The motion passed by majority vote.

PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING

Mr. Aker read the bids for a county public safety building, out of the seven proposals, three did not include a price. Elevatus has service fees of 6.45% of the total project for estimated \$129,000, RQAW had 7% service fees on an estimated cost of \$210,000, K2M listed no price, Peterson Architecture had an estimated fee of \$195,000, American StructurePoint had a 8% service fee for an estimated \$312,000, Martin Riley had an estimated fee of \$203,000, MSS Engineering had an estimated fee of \$119,000. The estimated cost for the building ranged from \$2 million to \$3.9 million, however the price could change once it goes out to bid.

Mr. Monroe asked to table the discussion and investigate the possibility of purchasing land from IU Health at the current Portland EMS location to expand the facilities. The current proposal has the building location on the 68 acres along Votaw St., owned by the county. Mr. Aker explained the discussion was previously had about not expanding on grounds not owned by the county. He was in favor of moving forward with the design of the building to understand the costs to build. Mr. Monroe made a motion to table the bids until talks could be had with IU Health. Doug Horn seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted with Duane Monroe voting aye, Doug Horn voting aye and Chad Aker voting Nay. The motion passed by majority vote to table.

68 ACRE DEVELOPMENT

The commissioners having spoken with members from JCDC, would like them to handle the request for proposals (RFP) for the 68 Acre development along Votaw St. in Portland. Doug Horn made a motion to allow JCDC to handle the RFP for the 68 acres. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye, and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

A request for a county credit card from the Health Department for Amendi Willoughby was presented for commissioner approval. Doug Horn made a motion to allow the county credit card. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was had with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

A grant application from the Health Department for their Bioterrorism Grant was presented for commissioners' approval. Doug Horn made a motion to accept the grant application as presented. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was had with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye, and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

The payroll docket was presented for commissioner approval. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the payroll docket as presented. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was had with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye, and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The claims docket for July was presented for commissioner approval. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the claims docket as presented. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye, and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

A contract with LEAP Managed IT for IT services for the county was presented for commissioner approval. The agreement includes a first ninety-day price of \$14,391.10 per month. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the agreement as presented. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye, and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

An Emergency Claim to Innovative concepts for audio upgrades to the auditorium was presented for commissioner approval. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the claim as presented. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was had with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye, and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

An Emergency claim to REA for work on the 68 Acre project in the amount of \$10,992.50 was presented for commissioner approval. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the claim as presented. Duane Monroe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was had with Doug Horn voting aye, Duane Monroe voting aye, and Chad Aker voting aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

With no further business, Doug Horn made a motion to adjourn at 11:44 a.m; Duane Monroe seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

JAY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Chad Aker


Duane Monroe


Doug Horn

Attest: 
Jay County Auditor