

JAY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Chad Aker

Duane Monroe

Doug Horn

Attest: Emily Franks
Jay County Auditor

OCTOBER 27, 2025

The Jay County Commissioners met in session on Monday, October 27, 2025 at 9:00. a.m. in the courthouse auditorium. Attending was Doug Horn, Duane Monroe, auditor Emily Franks, attorney Wes Schemenaur, and Chad Aker, president, presiding. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the minutes from October 14, 2025. Duane Monroe seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

COURTHOUSE

Bruce Sutton, superintendent, came to the commissioners with a quote for work on the drains on the south side of the building. The quote is significantly higher than in the past as it will be a different application. Doug Horn made a motion to approve quote from Nu-Flow Indy for \$18,500. Duane Monroe seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

A BETTER LIFE/BRIANNA'S HOPE

Pastor Randy Davis came to commissioners on behalf of Brianna's Hope, to request county funds. He spoke about their podcast, "Faith in your Recovery". The podcast has over 200 episodes and features interviews with both locals and celebrities. They now have an opportunity to take the platform to ROKU tv. It would be a one-hour time slot, two times a week, which includes 45 minutes of podcast content. The remaining fifteen minutes will be a new segment called "Truth Behind Hope" including interviews, devotionals, and meetings with recovery groups. Mr. Aker spoke in favor of the podcast as a benefit to the community and the region. Mr. Davis explained the organization now has 44 chapters, across three states. Their request from the county would be \$25,000 towards the total project cost of \$57,900.

Chad Aker suggested the funds come from the opioid settlement monies as the budget for 2026 has already been set. Duane Monroe made a motion to approve the request from Opioid settlement monies in the amount of \$25,000, if not needed for the recovery house. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

INSURANCE RENEWAL- ONE DIGITAL

Jessica Clayton, broker OneDigital, came to the commissioners to discuss the county's health insurance renewal for 2026. There were two insurance companies that quoted; PHP and UHC. The renewal with PHP, the current company, came in at a 5% increase with 40% refund agreement and \$80,000 wellness credit. The estimated increase before the credit would be around \$77,000. The quote from UHC came in at a 2% decrease but had no integrated HRA, and no refund agreement.

Mrs. Clayton discussed the non-medical plans through Principal. She proposed the county provide two separate dental plans for employees to include a higher annual max, and to pay at the 99th percentile instead of the 90th. The commissioners agreed to try the dual option dental plans for this year's open enrollment. Duane Monroe asked if anything could be relayed to employees on ways to lower claims, such as not using the ER for non-emergency items. Mrs. Clayton will try to address that during open enrollment meetings. Emily Franks will work through the renewal and provide options for employee rates to commissioners at their next meeting.

DEBRIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Samantha Rhodehamel, returned to the commissioners with an amended Debris Management Plan. Duane Monroe made a motion to approve the debris management plan. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Samantha Rhodehamel, EMA director, and Mike Weitzel, Portland Fire Chief, came to the commissioners to discuss the proposed countywide burn ordinance. Mr. Monroe expressed concern with allowing an exception for the highway and surveyor departments in the ordinance. Mr. Weitzel explained the ordinance required those burning to follow state guidelines with the only addition being to notify dispatch first and put in fines for continued problems. When questioned if those who do not follow state guidelines were fined, Mr. Weitzel clarified only the State or IDEM has authority for any citations or fines and have limited resources. Mr. Aker voiced his support for the ordinance as a firefighter, to make agencies aware of controlled burns and for citizens to follow federal and state regulations.

Mr. Horn expressed concerns regarding the proposed ordinance, citing the provision requiring those to always supervise a burn. He noted that it would not be realistic to continually attend a burn lasting several days. Larry "Ray" Newton, sheriff, also expressed concerns regarding his department's responsibility to cite any offenders and that the department would not receive any of the fine. Mr. Weitzel noted it was a suggestion in the ordinance to split the fees between the fire agency and a training fund through EMA. He added the fee was not the goal of the ordinance and could remit their portion to the sheriff's department. While the fire chief could cite, Mr. Schemenaur explained it would be best for the sheriff's department to cite as an investigation would be needed for prosecution.

A resident in the meeting questioned if they called in a burn, would it be followed up on, then cited for not watching a controlled fire over multiple days. Mr. Weitzel explained the purpose of making dispatch aware was to not send resources out for a controlled burn. This would save taxpayers money, lower risk to first responders, and not tie up resources on a non-emergent matter. Mr. Horn acknowledged the benefits but again cited the infeasibility of farmers watching burns constantly over several days. After continued discussion, there were no motions made regarding the proposed ordinance. Mr. Weitzel asked anyone with questions on the proposed ordinance, to reach out to him.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Samantha Rhodehamel, director, requested approval to apply for the Hazardous Materials (HMEP) grant in the amount of \$3,500. The HMEP grant would be used for a propone refresher training. Duane Monroe made a motion to approve the grant application as presented. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

JEMS

Gary Barnett, Kyle Gerlach and Jessica Curtis, shift supervisors, came to the commissioners to give their monthly update on operations including a financial report. Mr. Barnett reported \$175,000 was billed with \$90,938.91 collected for those transports. Medicare/Medicaid payments will be delayed moving forward due to the government shutdown. Mrs. Curtis reported they are no longer able to obtain parts for their laryngoscopes. They have three options they wish to demo and hope to go with the lowest quote, but all three are within \$600, between \$2,949 and \$3,639. The laryngoscope with the camera increases the rate of first pass intubations by 85-90%. Duane Monroe made a motion to allow the department to purchase the laryngoscopes for the department. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote. Lastly, Mr. Gerlach reported that two out of the three AED cabinets have been installed. The third cabinet was damaged and is waiting for the manufacturer to proceed. They should have four quotes back for the upgraded security at the base, at the next meeting.

RETIREMENT CENTER

Stacey Johnson, director, came to the commissioners to give a monthly update on operations. They have moved residents into five apartments with two more moving into apartments, two residents will go to Howard County's County Home, and two residents will go to Carroll County's County home, one will go to the nursing home, and one will go to another RCAP facility. There is one resident left that will be touring a facility in South Bend.

A written recommendation to council regarding the incentive pay was discussed by commissioners. The recommendation included the updated amounts as approved at the prior meeting. Ms. Johnson, previously recommended employees sign a non-disclosure agreement to obtain the incentive payment. The commissioners questioned the purpose of the non-disclosure agreement. Ms. Johnson thought the agreement would be beneficial for rumors and drama, once the facility was closed. Mr. Schemenaur explained items that could not be included as a government entity. However, the agreement could cover residents relating to their financial and medical information. A clause was added to the written recommendation as follows: "Employees sign a non-disclosure agreement related to residents' sensitive information including but not limited to financial and medical". Doug Horn made a motion to approve the letter as presented with the addition. Duane Monroe seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

JCDC

Ceann Bales, executive director, spoke to the commissioners about the potential transfer of liens from the most recent tax sale to an entity, specifically Dunkirk. The thought process would be to hand it off to a developer instead of just offering the land to the adjacent landowner. There were 30 remaining parcels, with 19 of those being in Dunkirk. She will be approaching the other municipalities about the same opportunity and will walk alongside them in the process. Chad Aker spoke in favor of the idea for increased housing, and to get the properties back on the tax roll. Duane Monroe made a motion to move forward with the transfer of the 19 parcels. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Lastly, Mrs. Bales spoke about Club 720, in Adams County there have been 10 interested buyers, with six qualified. Randolph County has had two with 1 qualified. Vigo County had 102 interested buyers, but their population is 106,000. She noted a community gets out what they put in to the program. Mr. Schemenaur has reviewed the paperwork and will complete the required resolution. They had 24 applicants for the community developer position, with 20 that they are scoring. The interviews will start in the coming week.

CSI CONTRACT- CONTRACT

A 2026 contract with CSI for the Jay County Recorder was presented for commissioner approval. The contract is in the amount of \$5,500. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the contract as presented. Duane Monroe seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

2026 COUNTY CALENDAR/SCHEDULE

The 2026 calendar was presented to commissioners for discussion and approval. Mr. Aker suggested the two holidays for the primary and general election be removed from 2026 calendar. The county will be switching to voting centers and will not have any voting at the courthouse. Melissa Elliott, clerk, explained her office will be closed for regular business that day, and that she utilizes some county employees as poll workers. It was discussed how payment might work for those employees and who would be responsible for overtime. After discussion, Duane Monroe made a motion to approve the schedule as presented for 2026 and evaluate again next year with the voting centers. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by majority vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

The payroll docket was presented for commissioner approval. Duane Monroe made a motion to approve the payroll docket as presented. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

The claims docket for October was presented for commissioner approval. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the claim docket as presented. Duane Monroe seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Emergency Claims to Rundell, Ernstberger, Associates for \$21,076.64 related to the 68 Acre project and a claim to Leap Managed IT for \$7,240.50 was presented for commissioner approval. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the claims as presented. Duane Monroe seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Emergency claims related to the Owner-Occupied Rehab Program were presented for commissioner approval including: AirXRay for \$9,936 and \$9,283, Fortitude Consulting for \$9,000, \$22,638, \$3,500, \$16,640, \$24,913.06, \$1,500, \$15,750 and \$6,000, and Dave's Heating & Cooling for \$9,002.86. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the claims as presented. Duane Monroe seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

With no further business, Doug Horn made a motion to adjourn at 11:10 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

OCTOBER 29, 2025

The Jay County Commissioners met in special session, October 29, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.. in the courthouse auditorium. Attending was Doug Horn, Duane Monroe, auditor Emily Franks, and Chad Aker, president, presiding. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss insurance benefits for 2026.

INSURANCE RENEWAL

Emily Franks, auditor, presented figures to the commissioners regarding the employee health insurance for 2026. The \$80,000 credit for 2025 would allow the county to cover the increased premium rates. This would allow the employee premiums to remain the same as current. The anticipated 2026 wellness credit would allow the county to give an additional benefit to employees. Ms. Franks suggested the county HSA portion be increased to offset the deductible minimum increased by the IRS. The employee is currently responsible for the first \$3,300 and the county reimburses the remaining \$2,700 or \$6,600/\$5,400 for the family. The IRS minimum is increasing to \$3,400 for 2026 or \$6,800. Our of the 125 employees on the plan, 100 are on the high-deductible plan with HSA.

If the commissioners increase the HSA-Health Savings Account to cover the minimum. It would change the employee portion from \$100 a quarter for employee only, or \$200 a quarter for employee+1 plans to \$125 and \$250. The estimated increased cost would be \$22,700. Ms. Franks also presented figures for decreasing the employee premiums by 5-10%. Duane Monroe raised potential concerns over lowering the employee premiums based solely on the credit. If the credit would not be awarded in the subsequent year, employees could see a large increase in the premiums. The commissioners suggested a premium holiday for the

