

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:21 a.m.

JAY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Chad Aker

Duane Monroe

Doug Horn

Attest: Smile Sprankle
Jay County Auditor

NOVEMBER 24, 2025

The Jay County Commissioners met in session on Monday, November 24, 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. Duane Monroe made a motion to approve the minutes from the regular and executive session on November 10, 2025. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

RESOLUTION 2025-16

Resolution 2025-16: A resolution to transfer real estate was presented, and the meeting was opened to public comment. The resolution would transfer the tax title liens on nineteen Dunkirk parcels not sold at the most recent tax sale. The only organization to submit an application was Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation (DIDC). With no public comment, Duane Monroe made a motion to approve the resolution as presented. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

LIFESTREAM

Kevin DeCamp, manager, came to the commissioners for approval of a quarterly claim in the amount of \$198,829. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the quarterly claim as presented. Duane Monroe seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

BUILDING & PLANNING

John Hemmelgarn, director, came to the commissioners to give a quarterly update on operations. Housing permits were up slightly over last year with a couple of confined feeding expansions. Mr. Hemmelgarn gave an update on wind and solar ordinances as he believes they will be in place the first of 2026. The battery storage and carbon sequestration is largely regulated by the state but is looking to add setbacks.

JOURNEY HOME

Dan Baker, CEO, came before the commissioners to discuss the possibility of utilizing the county home for their organization. They explained their mission is to end veteran homelessness and that they are not a homeless shelter. Their goal is to keep veterans in their homes or find them housing within 3-6 months. The organization is currently based in Randolph County, but they would like to expand to support Jay County. Justin Lester, director of advancement and operations, discussed possible ideas following a tour of the facility. The organization currently helps roughly 60 veterans through Second Harvest and believes they could help an estimated 40-60 veterans in Jay County.

Mr. Lester explained they can help 15 veterans now but will get a grant to help up to 25 veterans. He briefly questioned the water line issue to the facility noting a possible grant through the Veteran Service Administration. Mr. Aker suggested they meet with the City of Portland officials regarding the matter. He also requested the organization provide commissioners with financial documentation to confirm they would be able to support themselves in the facility. Mr. Monroe echoed the concerns noting the high energy usage at the facility but would be interested in working with the organization. Mr. Baker added there

were possible grant opportunities for expanding the project and for improvements to the facility. The commissioners approved the group to move forward with the next steps.

SHERIFF

Larry "Ray" Newton, sheriff, provided commissioners with a copy of the most recent state jail inspection, noting no major issues were found. Mr. Newton also, requested commissioners approve the purchase of 5 routers for deputies' vehicles, they would replace the current cradle points utilized by the department. A quote from First Net, their internet provider, who specialize in services for first responders was \$5,495. The money is available in his budget to cover the purchase. Duane Monroe made a motion to approve the purchase of five routers for \$5,495 from First Net. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. Newton also requested commissioners approve an emergency claim to Reclaiming Design for plans to expanding their current garage to house the new radio system. He explained he will gather quotes for adding on to the garage as well as a separate building. The goal will be to take the plans to obtain quotes from three contractors. Mr. Monroe expressed concerns with getting the electrical out to the parking lot if they were to build a separate building. He then made a motion to approve the claim from Reclaiming Design in the amount of \$600. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

HIGHWAY

Bob Howell, superintendent, presented commissioners with several permits, mainly from Brightspeed. Commissioners then discussed amending the current ordinances to add a charge for driveway entrances, increase charges for other services and allow the department more time to respond to requests. Mr. Aker will meet with the department before the next meeting to discuss updates. Mr. Monroe requested they investigate prohibiting signs in the county right of way without permission of the county/commissioners. The proposed changes will be forwarded to the county attorney for his review.

Stephanie Klarer, assistant superintendent/ERC, presented an updated financial commitment letter with fee schedule for bridge #64. Perry Knox, SCJA, recommended the county include an additional \$50,000 for utilities. While the full amount is not expected to be needed, if it is not included in the funding application, it cannot be included later for reimbursement. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the new financial commitment letter for \$3,062,000. Duane Monroe seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote. Lastly, the department discussed the scoring for bridge #93 and #110 would need to be completed by the commissioners before the next meeting.

RETIREMENT CENTER

Stacey Johnson, director, came to the commissioners to give a monthly update on operations. She reported the final placement for their last gentlemen is pending with the remaining three residents moving out the next day. The board would like to see the current maintenance employee remain with the county for an estimated 7-10 hours a week. Mr. Aker agreed that someone would need to check on the facility a few times a week and make any necessary repairs. The employee will need to have the supervisor changed from the director to the commissioners. A new job description will need to be created for the change.

The highway will complete any snow plowing necessary and continue to store their equipment in the outbuildings. Mr. Howell reported they had been working with the department to remove items from the hog building. They briefly discussed moving the dumpster located at the retirement center to the highway, once the facility is closed. Ms. Johnson will be responsible for changing over all utility bills to the auditor's office to be paid out of the retirement center budget.

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. Their runs are currently down from last year at this time with \$227,001 in outstanding services. Mr. Gerlach presented commissioners with quotes for restricted access and surveillance for the Portland Base. The upgrade was recommended by the county's liability insurance carrier. The four quotes were from DEFCON Security, Pendleton, IN \$9,266.77, D-N-A Integrators, Indianapolis, IN \$11,010.37, Stylus Technologies, Bluffton, IN \$12,289.85 and Second Shift Solutions, Celina, OH for \$4,190. The department recommends accepting the quote from Second Shift Solutions but explained they had no money in their budget for any upgrades. Mr. Monroe requested the storage be consistent with tort claim filing deadlines, before making a motion to approve the quote from Second Shift Solutions to be paid out of Cum Cap Development. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. Gerlach then briefly discussed a recent surprise inspection by the DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency related to their controlled substances. They will walk through suggested changes with the county regarding their practices. While all suggestions could be implemented quickly, the department would still be on probation. As soon as they receive a final report, they will start implementing the new policies. Lastly, Mr. Barnett reminded commissioners the new ambulance from Braun should be ready on February 4th, 2026. The company cannot honor the chassis price, but it should be around \$210,000.

OPIOID SETTLEMENT TASKFORCE

Kimbra Reynolds, director Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition (JCDDPC), gave commissioners an update on the rehab house. The state released details on the grant submitted on June 30th, 2025. The proposals are not due until January 2026, with awards made March 2026 and improvements are unable to start until July 2026. In order to qualify for the funding, at least 50% must be matched by local opioid dollars. The long timeline made the committee decide to regroup and complete the proposals in phases. The architect has the drawings back to the contractors to get three quotes and a copy was also given to commissioners. Phase one will be the existing home and deading the utilities to the garage. Phase two will work with the state grant match to complete the expansion to allow for 16 men instead of the current 6.

68 ACRE DEVELOPMENT

Cecil Penland, partner at Rundell Ernstberger Associates (REA), gave commissioners a brief overview of the current 68 project financials. The current estimate for the first phase of the project is \$2,564,000 with estimated funding of ARPA funds of \$1,281,946, READI 2.0 \$1,210,000, City of Portland \$400,000, and an estimated \$400,000 from the county or Jay County Redevelopment Commission. They received one proposal from a developer who would like to develop the whole site, which is under review. They are two thirds completed with the design of the project. Their next step will be to follow the specific process of obtaining a Right of Way (ROW) permit from the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) within the next few weeks. This would see bidding set for early 2026.

Chad Aker spoke about the need for housing in the county and the benefit of the area being in the current City TIF district. He explained that JCDC is working with the City of Portland to take money generated and reinvest them into more infrastructure. Doug Horn expressed concern about what entity would be responsible for any additional project costs moving forward, including requests from potential investors. Duane Monroe spoke against the request noting no developers for the project, lack of backing for the project and stalled READI dollars.

Carl Walker, Jay County Redevelopment Commission president, questioned why the request to the city was only \$400,000 and not the remaining cost of phase one. Mr. Aker explained the original request was for \$800,000 but thought it would be better to divide the cost between both entities. Mr. Monroe explained his understanding was that \$750,000 was going to be requested from the City of Portland. Lastly, Mr. Walker asked where the estimates

stood for the project. Mr. Penland explained the numbers had decreased in phase one due to a decrease in scale. Their goal was to work within the budget given.

Their first phase will focus primarily along the highway, which will bring higher returns. Mr. Penland added the return on investment would be higher than previously anticipated since the county facility would not be taking up one of the locations. Mr. Walker questioned if REA was comfortable with the current proposed soft costs. Mr. Penland explained the numbers are based on construction and tariff costs with a 10% contingency in the numbers. However, due to those factors, he could offer no assurances on the number, but as they refine the design it will normally decrease.

Discussion turned to the ARPA monies obligated to the project, and the pending READI 2.0 award. Mr. Aker expressed concern over the county forfeiting the funds. Mr. Monroe believed Baker Tilly could help the county by obligating the committed funds to another project. Mr. Schemenaur cautioned that it would be a decision the firm would need to stand behind keeping in mind changes to administration at the federal level. Bryan Alexander, council member, agreed to reach out to the federal government again for an answer. Cecil Penland added READI monies could be reallocated, but they would need to start the application process over again. Mr. Aker again requested a motion be made to the redevelopment commission to commit \$400,000 to the project. There was no motion made and the matter died.

Duane Monroe then made a motion to bid out the 68-acre farm ground for 2026. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by majority vote with Chad Aker opposing the motion.

RESOLUTION 2025-17

Resolution 2025-17, approving certain matters in connection with the Jay County Economic Development Area related to the proposed new TIF districts, was presented for commissioner approval. Duane Monroe made a motion to approve resolution 2025-17 as presented. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

WHEREAS, the Jay County Redevelopment Commission (the “Redevelopment Commission”) on November 12, 2025, approved and adopted a resolution (the “Declaratory Resolution”) (i) designating an area known as the Jay County Economic Development Area as an economic development area pursuant to Section 41 of Indiana Code § 36-7-14-1, et seq. (the “Act”), (ii) approving an economic development plan for the Area (the “Plan”), (iii) designating as allocation area pursuant to Section 39 the Act, each of the Skycrest Allocation Area, Allocation Area, the Sun Chief Allocation Area, and the Hodson-Rose Allocation Area, and (iv) designated as a designated taxpayer pursuant to Section 39.3 of the Act, each of Suncrest Solar Energy, LLC, Sun Chief Solar Farm LLC, Hodson Greendefine Jay Desoto LLC, and Rose Gold Solar, LLC; and

WHEREAS, the Jay County Advisory Plan Commission, on November 13, 2025, approved and adopted a resolution (the “Plan Commission Order”) determining that the Declaratory Resolution and Plan conform to the plan of development for Jay County, Indiana (the “County”), and approving the Declaratory Resolution and the Plan; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 16(b) of the Act, the Redevelopment Commission has submitted the Declaratory Resolution, the Plan and the Plan Commission Order to the Board of Commissioners of the County (the “Board”), as the executive and legislative body of the County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF JAY COUNTY, INDIANA, as follows:

1. Pursuant to Section 16(b) of the Act, the Board determines that the Declaratory Resolution and the Plan conform to the plan of development for the County, and approves the Declaratory Resolution, the Plan and the Plan Commission Order.

2. Pursuant to Section 41(c) of the Act, the Board hereby approves the determination that the Area is an “economic development area” pursuant to the Act.
3. This Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage by the Board.

JCDC

Ceann Bales, executive director, presented Resolution 2025-18, to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Fort Wayne Housing Authority to Participate in the Hoosier Homes Program along with a cooperative agreement and waiving of a 2nd hearing. Duane Monroe made a motion to approve the resolution as presented. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

The contract with JCDC for 2026 was briefly discussed with both parties agreeing to the current terms. JCDC has filled the position of Community Developer for the first of the year. The budget amount approved by council for 2026 was \$254,250. Mr. Aker requested cities contribute a bigger percentage moving forward as they see a bigger benefit from the organization. Duane Monroe made a motion to approve up to the \$254,250. Doug Horn seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

2026 MEETING CHANGE

The commissioners requested the meeting for March 23rd, 2026 be moved to March 30, 2026 due to spring break. Doug Horn made a motion to move the meeting date as suggested. Duane Monroe seconded the motion and 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 and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

The claims docket for November was presented for commissioner approval. Duane Monroe asked if the commissioners could terminate the contract with REA and call for final payment. Wes Schemenaur advised the decision would be up to the redevelopment commission to determine if they wanted to continue with the project. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the claim docket as presented. Duane Monroe seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

A request for a credit card for Monte Shrack, courthouse superintendent, was presented for commissioner approval. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the request as presented. Duane Monroe seconded the motion and motion passed by unanimous vote.

A claim to James Schumacher Heating and Cooling for \$17,000 was presented for commissioner approval. The request from West Jay Community center to replace four furnaces was for 2026, but requested the money sooner. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the claim for payment in 2025 pending council approval. Duane Monroe seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Emergency claims to Community Fiber Solution for \$134.90 including a late fee was submitted for commissioner approval along with an Owner Occupied Rehab claim to Mustard Seed for \$500.00. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the two claims. 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 Kleinpeter Consulting LLC for \$6,500 was presented for commissioner approval. Doug Horn made a motion to approve the two 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 11:37 a.m; Duane Monroe seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

JAY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Chad Aker



Duane Monroe



Doug Korn

Attest:

Jay County Auditor

