

JAY COUNTY COUNCIL

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ATTEST:  _____
JAY COUNTY AUDITOR

AUGUST 12TH, 2026

The Jay County Council met in session on Wednesday, August 12th, 2026 at 6:00 PM, in the auditorium at the Jay County Courthouse. Attending was Bryan Alexander, Harold Towell, Michael Brewster, Cindy Bracy, Faron Parr, auditor Emily Franks, county attorney Wes Schemenaur and Matt Minnich, president presiding. Absent Randy May. Cindy Bracy made a motion to approve the minutes from July 8th, 2026. Michael Brewster seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

ADDITIONALS

COUNTY GENERAL

1000.32700.00000.0068

Commissioners- Contractual Services

\$35,000.00

The additional appropriation was for the Baker Tilly Comprehensive Financial Study. Michael Brewster made a motion to approve the additional appropriation as presented. Faron Parr seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

1000.35500.00000.0232

Circuit Court- Court Appt. Doctors/ Psychiatrists

\$ 5,000.00

Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the additional appropriation as presented. Faron Parr seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

LIT- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1112.31480.00000.0000

Professional Services- Veridus

\$30,000.00

Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the additional appropriation as presented. Harold Towell seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

OPIOID RESTRICTED FUNDS

1237.31430.00000.0000

Drug Prevention Coalition

\$100,000.00

The additional appropriation was presented as a progress payment for the sober living house. Michael Brewster made a motion to approve the additional appropriation as presented. Bryan Alexander seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

BACKHOE REPAIR & REPLACE

4908.44800.00000.0000

Equipment Loan Payments

\$3,000.00

Michael Brewster made a motion to approve the additional appropriation as presented. Faron Parr seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

ARR-2021 CLFRF

8950.31480.00000.0000

Professional Services- Ritter

\$2,200.00

The additional appropriation was presented for Ritter Strategic Services invoice# 202361. Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the additional appropriation as presented. Cindy Bracy seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

2026 COMMUNITY CROSSINGS GRANT

9121.43200.00000.0000

Paving

\$625,353.58

Faron Parr made a motion to approve the additional appropriation as presented. Cindy Bracy seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

TRANSFERS

1000.14900.00000.0068 Co. General- Comm (Health Insurance) to 1000.16100.00000.0068 (Unemployment Comp) \$5,000

4903.44800.00000.0000 Backhoe Repair & Replace (Equipment Loan) to 4903.25500.00000.0000 (Backhoe Parts & Service)

\$3,000. Faron Parr made a motion to approve both transfers as presented. Michael Brewster seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

JAY COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION

Dylan Muhlenkamp, treasurer, came before council to request they consider establishing a dedicated maintenance and improvement fund for the Jay County Fairgrounds. The request would be for \$50,000 annually, with \$10,000 dedicated to the 4-H council. While the county leases to the Jay County Fair Association, the Association has a sub-lease with the 4-H Council. Types of events hosted annually include: 4-H programs, Facility Rentals, Auctions and Educational Programs. The benefits were explained including preserving county-owned property, reducing deferred maintenance and encouraging tourism.

Mr. Muhlenkamp explained there would be some accountability as each project would be proposed to the county with quotes/estimates and the expected benefit. He added they have started an annual giving campaign and are in the process of obtaining 501c 3 status. The dedicated money could be used as part of matching grants they hope to obtain. The commissioners were in favor of the addition to the budget but wanted the council opinion before moving forward. Harold Towell expressed reservations with the dedication of funds due to a lack of trust and budget concerns. Bryan Alexander spoke in favor of the proposal explaining he would rather vote on the budget cycle than additional appropriations every year. Cindy Bracy stated that while the Jay County Fairgrounds were a tremendous asset, there was budget uncertainty, especially now with state legislative changes. Matt Minnich asked the commissioners to put the request in for their 2027 budget and the council would see what could be allocated through the budget process.

JCDC QUARTERLY UPDATE

Ceann Bales, director, came before council to give a quarterly update on operations. The County comprehensive grant has been submitted to OCRA. The READI 2.0 Dunkirk Housing project has been submitted to IEDC. Colby Cline has completed the design for the Pennville Park Project. They recently presented to the board infill housing project in Dunkirk for the 19 properties obtained following the commissioners’ 2025 tax sale. The next layer after the proposed floor plans will be utilities and speaking with developers. Looking ahead, they will continue to work on scanning all downtown buildings that will allow them to map out an intentional and strategic plan for downtown.

REMC ABATEMENT REQUEST

Ceann Bales, JCDC director, came before council to present a ten-year abatement request from REMC. The company will be demolishing their existing office building, renovating the existing warehouse and building a new 38,000 square foot warehouse/office. Neil Draper, President/CEO, explained the company had outgrown their current facility and with the expansion they will hire one IT position on site. The expansion will also have a few spare offices for future growth. The company currently has 5,400 meters servicing 4,800 households in Jay, Adams and Randolph Counties. Mr. Minnich questioned whether the guidelines from 2005 needed to be reviewed like the agricultural guidelines. Mr. Alexander explained with the limited number of tools, he wanted companies to know the county is their partner, knowing we are better off with you than without you. Bryan Alexander then made a motion to approve the 10-year real estate abatement request as presented. Harold Towell seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

SALARY AMENDMENT- HEALTH DEPT.

Elasha Lennartz, administrator, came before council to discuss the new dual position dual of community liaison. The department is currently without the community health educator and health liaison but are still required to provide items needed for Indiana public health requirements. The position from Waggoner, Irwin and Scheele came back at a midpoint of \$29.55 an hour. The current position makes \$28.05 an hour. Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the new position at the current rate and slate the \$29.55 for 2027’s budget. Michael Brewster seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

NON-BINDING REVIEW OF TAXING UNITS

The members of the county council reviewed the DLGF estimated levy amounts as well as the DLGF estimated circuit breaker impact upon all county taxing units. The units analyzed were: Jay County, Bearcreek Township, Greene Township, Jackson Township, Jefferson Township, Knox Township, Madison Township, Noble Township, Penn Township, Pike Township, Richland Township, Wabash Township, and Wayne Township. Also the Town of Pennville, City of Dunkirk, Town of Bryant, Town of Salamonia, Town of Redkey, and the City of Portland. Furthermore, the levy and circuit breaker amounts for the Jay County Public Library, Penn Township Library, Dunkirk Library, the Jay County School Corporation, and Jay County Solid Waste District (though there were none levied against this non-tax based unit) were discussed. After discussion, Cindy Bracy made a motion to recommend taxing units adopt budgets, rates and levies that do not exceed limitations imposed by the estimated maximum levies, less any limitations imposed by tax caps, and that units consider adopting budgets, rates, and levies that are less than the estimated maximum levies. Also, while it is imperative to stay within, it is not necessary to fully spend the levied amount. Faron Parr seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

POLICY ANALYTICS PROPOSAL

An engagement agreement with Policy Analytics LLC for a levy freeze and property tax relief income tax analysis was presented to council. The agreement from August 1, 2026 to July 31, 2027, was not to exceed \$10,000. The analysis would be vital in determining the LIT structure for the county moving forward. Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the proposal from Policy Analytic as presented. Faron Parr seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

MUST MEETING

The council members had received no feedback on the proposed meeting date of August 26th, 2026. It was decided to go ahead and notice the meeting for that date.

With no further business for the council, Michael Brewster made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Faron Parr seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

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NAY

JAY COUNTY COUNCIL

Cindy Bracy

ATTEST: Emily Frank
JAY COUNTY AUDITOR