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STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, December 15, 2025

Time: 5:00 P.M. (CST)

Location: Commissioner Meeting Room, 53 E. Mound Street, Knox, Indiana

2026000198

JENNIFER MADSEN, RECORDER

STARKE COUNTY, KNOX, IN

RECORDED AS PRESENTED

01/22/2026 09:28 AM

0.00

I. Call to Order

The Starke County Council met in regular session on Monday, December 15, 2025. Council members present were President Todd Leinbach, Vice President Bruce Bennett, Kay Gudeman, Cassandra Hine, Howard Bailey, Dave Pearman and Bill Crease attended via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:00 p.m. A quorum was confirmed. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

II. Opening of Public Hearing – Alleged CF-1 Filing Non-Compliance (Mammoth North LLC)

Motion: Councilman Bruce Bennett made a motion to open the public hearing regarding an alleged failure to timely file a CF-1 form related to Mammoth North LLC.

Second: Councilman Howard Bailey Seconded.

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion immediately followed regarding the absence of the County Attorney, conflicting posted meeting times, and recent receipt of extensive documentation. Due to the absence of legal counsel and the complexity of the matter, the Council discussed procedural options.

Action: Councilman Bruce Bennett's motion to open the public hearing was rescinded, and the Council proceeded with other county business until the County Attorney arrived.

III. Other County Business

A. Transfer for Fire Suppression System Repairs

Council discussed a request brought forward earlier in the day by the Commissioners regarding leaking fire suppression sprinkler standpipes in the county building.

It was noted that funds could not be transferred from janitorial supplies due to fund restrictions. The repair is to be paid from Cum Cap.

Motion: Councilman Dave Pearman moved to approve a transfer of \$3,500 from Cum Cap funds for Annex 1 fire suppression system repairs.

Second: Councilwoman Kay Gudeman seconded.

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

B. Salary Ordinance Correction – Deputy Coroner On-Call Stipend

Council reviewed a discrepancy in the 2026 Salary Ordinance regarding the deputy coroner on-call stipend.

Discussion clarified that the requested stipend was **\$2.00 per hour**, consistent with the prior year, and that an increase in total cost was due solely to adding fifteen (15) county-observed holidays.

Motion: Councilwoman Kay Gudeman moved to correct the 2026 Salary Ordinance to reflect a \$2.00 per hour on-call stipend for the deputy coroner as requested.

Second: Councilwoman Cassandra Hine seconded.

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

C. Additional Appropriation – Ordinance No. 35 (EMA Salary)

Council considered Ordinance No. 35 regarding an additional appropriation previously approved at the prior meeting for a \$1,000 salary adjustment for EMA.

Motion: Councilman Bruce Bennett moved to approve Ordinance No. 35 as presented.

Second: Councilman Dave Pearman seconded.

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

D. Transfer Ordinance No. 36

Council reviewed Ordinance No. 36, which included the following transfers:

- \$68 transfer related to Purdue Extension dues and subscriptions
- EMS staffing reduction of \$40,000, with \$10,000 reallocated to ambulance supplies and \$30,000 to software

Motion: Councilwoman Kay Gudeman moved to approve Ordinance No. 36 and associated transfers.

Second: Councilwoman Cassandra Hine seconded.

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

A clerical error involving an incorrect signature block was identified and noted for correction. Correction will be made with ordinance 36 to be signed next meeting.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Motion: Councilwoman Cassandra Hine moved to approve the County Council meeting minutes of November 6, 2025, and November 17, 2025.

Second: Councilman Bruce Bennett seconded.

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

V. 2026 County Council Meeting Schedule

Council discussed meeting times and dates for 2026, including public accessibility and conflicts with county holidays.

After discussion, consensus was reached to continue meetings at **6:00 p.m.** on the **third Monday of each month**, with exceptions due to holidays.

Motion: Councilman Bruce Bennett moved to approve the 2026 meeting schedule with meetings held at 6:00 p.m. on the third Monday of each month, except:

- January meeting moved to **Wednesday, January 21, 2026**
- February meeting moved to **Wednesday, February 18, 2026**

Second: Councilwoman Cassandra Hine seconded.

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

VI. Re-Opening of Public Hearing – CF-1 Filing (Mammoth North LLC)

Motion: Councilman Dave Pearman moved to open the Public Hearing for the 2nd time.

Second: Councilman Howard Bailey seconded.

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

Upon arrival of the County Attorney, the Council reopened the public hearing regarding the CF-1 filing related to Mammoth North LLC.

Public comment and statements were received from representatives of Mammoth North LLC, including acknowledgment of an administrative error related to filing deadlines. It was stated that all required tax payments had been made and that the filing deficiency had been cured within the terms of the Economic Development Agreement.

Council members questioned the legal significance of the late filing, past county practices regarding CF-1 compliance, and potential impacts to the county.

VII. Motions Related to CF-1 Filing

Motion: Councilwoman Cassandra moved to schedule an Executive Session to review the submitted materials and potential litigation concerns.

Second: None.

Result: Motion died for lack of a second.

Motion: Councilman Dave Pearman moved to accept the CF-1 filing as submitted with a formal warning that late filings will not be tolerated in the future.

Second: Councilman Bruce Bennett seconded with explanation citing prior cooperation and community investment.

Result: Motion passed (5-2). Councilwomen Cassandra Hine and Kay Gudeman voted nay.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Motion: Councilwoman Kay Gudeman moved to close the public hearing.

Second: Councilwoman Cassandra Hine seconded.

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,


Teresa Trout
Starke County Auditor Pro Tem

Council Members

Signature

Date

Todd Leinbach
President



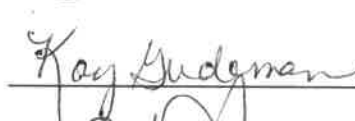
1/21/26

Bruce Bennett
Vice-President



1/21/26

Dave Pearman



1/21/26

Kay Gudeman



1/21/26

Cassandra Hine



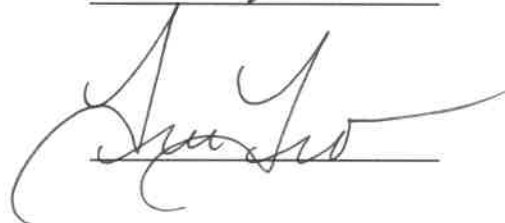
1/21/26

Howard Bailey



1/21/26

Bill Crase



1/21/26

ATTEST:
Teresa Trout
Auditor Pro Tem