Minutes of
Jackson County Commissioners
August 4, 2026
9:00 AM

Present: Commissioner Drew Markel, Commissioner Drew Storey and Commissioner Andrew Stauffer

Absent: None

Commissioner Markel called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by a moment of silence.

Approval of Minutes
A motion to approve the regular meeting minutes from July 21, 2026, was made by Stauffer and seconded by Markel. The motion carried (3-0).

Payroll and Claims

- Payroll dated July 31, 2026, in the amount of $595,066.16 was approved. A motion was made by Storey and seconded by Stauffer. The motion carried (3-0).
- Claims dated August 4, 2026, in the amount of $2,816,308.86 were approved. A motion was made by Storey and seconded by Stauffer. The motion carried (3-0).

Reports from Other Committees

Commissioner Markel reported that preparations were underway for the upcoming Rock the Rind Watermelon Festival. He noted that VIP tickets had sold out and festival organizers reported only a limited number of tickets remained available for the event scheduled August 6 through August 8, 2026. No further committee reports were presented.

New Business

Award of Bid- 2027 Dump Trucks for Highway Department
In the absence of Highway Superintendent Jerry Ault, Administrative Assistant Julie Wehmiller presented bid results for the purchase of a 2027 dump truck for the Highway Department. Commissioners reviewed the following bids previously opened at the July 21, 2026, meeting:

- Ascendance Truck Centers – $378,593.44
- Sternberg International Truck Sales – $379,957.40
- Stoops Freightliner – $390,526.00
- JX Peterbilt – $412,794.50
- Palmer/Kenworth of Louisville – $459,022.00

Wehmiller reported that Ault recommended awarding the bid to Ascendance Truck Centers as the lowest responsible bidder. Commissioners discussed vehicle specifications, including engine requirements and long-term reliability considerations.

A motion was made by Storey and seconded by Stauffer to award the bid to Ascendance Truck Centers in the amount of $378,593.44, contingent upon Commissioner Stauffer's review and approval of the engine specifications. The motion carried (3-0).

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Karla Hubbard - Health Department Public Copier Contract
Health Department Administrator Karla Hubbard presented a proposed copier replacement contract with Gordon Flesch Company. Hubbard explained the department's current copiers are approximately eight years old and replacement units had been anticipated as part of the department's bond-funded equipment upgrades.

Hubbard reported that the proposed contract pricing was approximately $3,500 less than previous estimates and would also reduce monthly maintenance costs. She requested authorization to execute the electronic contract.

A motion to authorize Hubbard to execute the copier contract was made by Storey and seconded by Stauffer. The motion carried (3-0).

Old Business

Fairgrounds Grandstand Improvement Update
Storey provided an update regarding Fairgrounds improvement projects. He reported that discussions continue regarding funding needs for the proposed lift station project and that a budget request amount is expected to be available in the coming weeks for consideration during budget hearings.

Storey stated there had been no new developments regarding selection recommendations for the Fairgrounds Grandstand Project. He also reported that the Fair Board has plans to meet the following week to wrap up activities associated with the 2026 Jackson County Fair, with additional updates expected at a future meeting.

Miscellaneous Business

Daulton Anderson - Jackson County Building Commissioner
Not present.

Julie Wehmiller - Highway Administrative Assistant
Provided updates regarding upcoming paving projects, noting work is anticipated to begin later in the week or the following week depending on weather conditions. She further reported that Bridge 197 had been successfully moved to the Highway Department facility and that INDOT had approved relocation of the bridge within the Jackson County Fairgrounds so long as it remains on fairgrounds property.

Sheriff Rick Meyer
No report.

Jeff Hubbard – Human Resources
No report.

Auditor Melissa Gray
Auditor Melissa Gray presented the July 2026 Fund Balance Report for review. Gray also informed Commissioners that the Association of Indiana Counties had provided copies of the 2026 Indiana County Fact Book for review and comparison with peer counties statewide.

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Susan Bevers – County Attorney
County Attorney Susan Bevers introduced Mike Chavez, Forest Supervisor for the Hoosier National Forest. Chavez attended the meeting to introduce himself to the Commissioners and provide information regarding Hoosier National Forest operations within Jackson County.

Chavez reported that the Hoosier National Forest manages approximately 205,000 acres across nine counties, including approximately 24,000 acres in Jackson County. He explained that while National Forest property is exempt from local property taxes, Jackson County receives compensation through Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and Secure Rural Schools funding programs. Chavez reported these payments totaled approximately $102,000 to Jackson County during the previous year. He also provided contact information and encouraged Commissioners to contact him regarding constituent concerns involving National Forest lands.

The Commissioners confirmed their next meeting will be held on August 18, 2026, at 9:00 AM.

Seeing no further business, the Commissioners recessed until August 18, 2026, at 9:00 AM.

Signed on the 18th day of August 2026.

Andrew Stauffer

Drew Markel

Drew Storey

Melissa Gray - Attest