

MINUTES
ELKHART COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
117 N. 2nd St. Room 104, Goshen, IN 46526
February 19, 2026

The meeting of the Elkhart County Council was called to order by Council President, Tom Stump at 4:00 p.m., in Room 104 of the County Administrative Building, Goshen, Indiana. Members present were Council President Tom Stump, Council Vice President Dave Hess, Steven Clark, Adam Bujalski, and Darryl Riegsecker. Also, present was Tiara Jackson, County Auditor, and Steven Olsen, County Attorney's Office. Absent were Doug Graham and Randy Yohn.

** This meeting commenced pursuant to public notice under the Indiana open door law. This meeting was made available for the public and press to attend in-person and virtually in remote real-time observation via YouTube. (YouTube recordings will be available for a period of 90 days.)

MINUTES: Approval of CC Minutes for January 15, 2026.

On motion to approve made by Riegsecker and seconded by Clark, the Council unanimously carried and approved the minutes as presented with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 456)

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COMMISSIONERS: Suzie Weirick spoke about House Bill 1001 that was passed out of the Indiana State Judiciary Committee on 2/18/26. This Bill will remove local control under both County and Municipal Planning and Zoning Ordinances. It removes the ability to maintain oversight and regulate design elements, including the number of rooms, setbacks, parking spaces, etc. without regard to the size of parcel containing the proposed structure. Removal of local oversight directly affects septic systems, public health, traffic, stormwater and the capacity of County services. A "One Size Fits All" zoning mandate from the State does not reflect the realities of rural, suburban, and urban counties across Indiana. There are always unique circumstances that require expertise and oversight from local Planning and Zoning experts. The Commissioners' are calling on all local officials and citizens to join them in their opposition and reach out to State Senators opposing this legislation. Comments should be submitted by the weekend, as final voting by the Senate will be the following Monday or Tuesday. The author of the Bill is Representative Doug Miller. Tom Stump agreed with Suzie Weirick's remarks.

COUNCIL: Clark spoke about SEA-1, conveyed Doug Graham's well wishes to Glenn Null for him, and also presented Glenn with a lifetime achievement award certificate signed by all of the Council members. Clark also mentioned that Senator Linda Rogers from Elkhart County has entered an amendment that would help with Bill SEA-1, and no one's taxes should likely go up from it. On the contrary, they should likely stay lower because of it. He also wanted to give a "shout out" to Senator Dorio and Representative Wesco for going to bat for Elkhart County and trying to get legislation passed for us that would cause cost reductions. Stump spoke about his memories with Glenn Null and gave well wishes to him on his last meeting attendance.

SHERIFF: None

SB-8 BILL UPDATE:

Kristen Edson, Executive Director of the Elkhart Public Library, gave a presentation about the Community Impact Report and pointed out her staff's program attendance metrics and stated that they are impressive. The Elkhart Public Library is the 14th largest library in the State, but they are the 7th largest in participation of attendance at programs. They had a 10% increase in student sign-ups for their Summer Reading Challenge and they are now going to expand and include adults in that as well. She also spoke about the

effects that the new SB-8 Bill will have on the libraries in Elkhart County and their Budget Approval Process. They would have to come before the Council more frequently for binding review processes because they are reducing the growth quotient. Other libraries in the County might have to do so as well. Clark spoke and commented that he didn't see an issue with overseeing the budgets for the libraries. Hess spoke as well on how the processes used to be.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION EXPLANATIONS:

A. CFEC PLACEMAKING GRANT (#9179)

1. Parks & Recreation Dept. (980) requested \$25,000.00 to be appropriated into Acct. #9179 for restoration of the Historic Log Cabin at the River Preserve County Park.

No one was at the meeting from the Parks Dept. to present this item, so it was tabled until the March Council Meeting.

On motion to table made by Clark and seconded by Riegsecker, the Council unanimously carried and approved to table this request until March with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 457)

B. CLERK PERPETUATION FUND (#1119)

1. Clerk's Office (101) requested \$29,382.00 to cover invoices from October 2025 for 3 new copiers purchased by the former Clerk.

Patty Pickens presented this request and answered questions by the Council.

On motion to approve made by Riegsecker and seconded by Bujalski, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 458)

C. GENERAL (#1000)

1. Code Enforcement (131) requested \$59,000.00 in funds to scan in Plat/Plan files & remaining Board of Zoning Appeals files into Docuware.

Mae Hope presented this request and answered questions by the Council.

On motion to approve made by Riegsecker and seconded by Clark, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 459)

D. HEALTH OPERATING (#1159)

1. Health Dept. (340) requested \$1,286.16 to repay Fund #9148 (Safety Pin) for a claim that should've been paid by Fund #1159 in 2022.

Melanie Sizemore presented this request to the Council.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Hess, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 460)

E. PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS GRANT (#8119)

1. Health Dept. (980) requested \$20,000.00 to appropriate Public Health Emergency Preparedness Funds for 2025-2026.

Melanie Sizemore presented this request and answered questions by the Council.

On motion to approve made by Bujalski and seconded by Clark, the Council unanimously

carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 461)

F. LEAD GRANT (#8183)

1. Health Dept. (980) requested \$3,780.00 to purchase handheld translator to be used by Lead Case Manager & Risk Assessors in the field.

Melanie Sizemore presented this request and answered questions by the Council.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Riegsecker, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 462)

G. TOBACCO PREVENTION ECDEP (#9168)

1. Health Dept. (981) requested \$37,500.00 to reduce the perception of tobacco and nicotine use among youth and increase parental engagement.

Melanie Sizemore presented this request to the Council.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Bujalski, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 463)

H. GENERAL (#1000)

1. Emergency Management (137) requested \$5,482.25 for donations line item for EMA.

Courtney Matthews presented this request and answered questions by the Council.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Riegsecker, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 464)

I. EMERGENCY PLANNING RIGHT-TO-KNOW (#1152)

1. LEPC/EMA (980) requested \$64,469.47 for the LEPC 2026 Budget.

Courtney Matthews presented this request to the Council.

On motion to approve made by Bujalski and seconded by Clark, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 465)

J. 20.703 HMEP DECONTAMINATION EXERCISE (#8205)

1. Emergency Management (980) requested \$7,000.00 from IDHS 100% reimbursable grant for County Decontamination Tabletop.

Jennifer Tobey presented this request to the Council.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Bujalski, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 466)

K. 20.703 HMEP LEPC TRAINING (#8206)

1. Emergency Management (980) requested \$22,500.00 from IDHS 100% reimbursable grant for LEPC tabletop exercises.

Jennifer Tobey presented this request to the Council.

On motion to approve made by Bujalski and seconded by Clark, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 467)

L. NIPSCO SAFETY GRANT (#9177)

1. Emergency Management (980) requested \$2,525.01 to appropriate remainder of grant for weather radios.

Courtney Matthews and Jennifer Tobey presented this request and answered questions by the Council.

On motion to approve made by Bujalski and seconded by Clark, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 468)

M. JAIL CAGIT LIT SPECIAL PROJECTS (#1114)

1. Buildings & Grounds (140) requested \$300,000.00 for unplanned large ticket repairs at the Elkhart County Jail.

Brad Rogers and Bob Barnes presented this request and answered questions by the Council.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Riegsecker, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 469)

N. GENERAL (#1000)

1. Commissioners (130) requested \$280,227.00 in funds that will be paid to the Humane Society on behalf of the communities who will reimburse the County in 2 installments.

Brad Rogers presented this request to the Council.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Riegsecker, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 470)

O. GENERAL (#1000)

1. Commissioners (130) requested \$250,000.00 in funds required for renovation to the Old Historic Goshen Courthouse.

Brad Rogers presented this request and answered questions by the Council. Steven Olsen spoke and stated that the old courthouse will have the ability to have security for the City Courts due to a lease with the City, if it's desired.

On motion to approve made by Bujalski and seconded by Clark, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 471)

P. GENERAL (#1000)

1. Commissioners (130) requested \$23,000.00 for costs for blocked train crossing warning and information.

Brad Rogers presented this request and declared that he would like to withdraw the request from the agenda.

(pg. 472)

Q. EDIT (#1112)

1. Highway Dept. (980) requested \$1,177,785.27 to appropriate 2025 Major Moves funds in

excess of target growth balance transferred from Major Moves to EDIT.

Kyle Wagner presented requests Q and S together and answered questions by the Council. Glenn Null, Goshen, spoke about use of funds. Clark answered.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Hess, the Council unanimously carried and approved requests Lettered “Q” and “S” on the agenda with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 473)

R. EDIT (#1112)

1. Highway Dept. (980) requested \$200,000.00 in funds for engineering assessment and associated costs to develop alternatives for the replacement/rehab. of Bridge 380 on E. Beardsley Ave.

Kyle Wagner presented this request to the Council.

On motion to approve made by Riegsecker and seconded by Hess, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 474)

S. MAJOR MOVES (#1172)

1. Highway Dept. (980) requested \$1,177,785,.27 in funds transfer for road maintenance for 2026. Goes along with Item Letter Q. on the agenda.

This request was presented with Letter Q on the agenda above.

(pg. 475)

T. MOTOR VEHICLE HIGHWAY (#1173)

1. Highway Dept. (980) requested \$500,000.00 in funds for paving, chip seal, construction, and associated costs.

Kyle Wagner presented this request to the Council.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Riegsecker, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 476)

U. ROAD MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION (#4901)

1. Highway Dept. (980) requested \$500,000.00 in funds for paving, chip seal, construction, and associated costs.

Kyle Wagner presented this request to the Council.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Riegsecker, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 477)

V. FIBER (#4928)

1. Highway Dept. (980) requested \$1,354,286.27 for the cash balance of Fund 4928 (Old FIBER Fund) to be moved to Fund 4931 (New FIBER Fund) as 4928 is no longer in use.

Tiara Jackson presented this request and answered questions by the Council. Only change was to change from continuous ongoing fund to one with a Calendar Year Date in setup.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Riegsecker, the Council unanimously

carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 478)

W. LIT SPECIAL PURPOSE (#1114)

1. Sheriff's Office (105) requested \$6,180,120.00 to appropriate payroll money moving Corrections employees from the General Fund to the SPECIAL LIT FUND for 2026.

Jeff Siegel presented this request to the Council.

On motion to approve made by Riegsecker and seconded by Bujalski, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 479)

X. SHERIFF DONATION FUND (#4101)

1. Sheriff's Office (105) requested \$25,518.00 to appropriate the current fund balance in the DONATION FUND for projects such as: K9 Program and Shop with the Sheriff Program.

Jeff Siegel presented this request and answered questions by the Council.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Riegsecker, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 480)

Y. STAR GRANT (#9119)

1. Sheriff's Office (105) requested \$22,918.00 to appropriate approved STAR AOD Interdiction Grant from the Elkhart County Drug-Free Partnership for 2026.

Jeff Siegel presented this request to the Council.

On motion to approve made by Riegsecker and seconded by Hess, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 481)

Z. SOLID WASTE OPERATING FUND (#1194)

1. Solid Waste/Landfill (338) requested \$3,342,546.00 in additional money for F1, F2, and PB7 Construction Projects.

John Bowers presented requests Z and AB together and answered questions by the Council.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Riegsecker, the Council unanimously carried and approved requests Lettered "Z" and "AB" on the agenda with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 482)

AA. SOLID WASTE CAPITAL RESERVE (#4915)

1. Solid Waste/Landfill (980) requested \$2,797,454.00 in additional money for F1, F2, and PB7 Construction Projects.

John Bowers presented this request and answered questions by the Council.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Riegsecker, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 483)

AB. SOLID WASTE CAPITAL RESERVE (#4915)

1. Solid Waste/Landfill (980) requested \$3,342,546.00 in additional money for F1, F2, and PB7 Construction Projects.

This request was presented along with Letter Z on the agenda above.

(pg. 484)

Total Appropriations Approved: \$21,704,110.70

REDUCTION REQUESTS:

AC. GENERAL (#1000)

1. Concord Township Assessor (114) requested a reduction in the amount of \$344,255.85 for reductions in the Concord Assessor Budget for 2026.

Cathy Searcy presented this request and answered questions by the Council.

On motion to approve made by Clark and seconded by Bujalski, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 485)

Total Reductions Approved: -\$344,255.85

TRANSFER REQUESTS REQUIRING COUNCIL ACTION:

AD. WIC GRANT (#8101)

1. Health Dept. (312)
From: 41120 Professional \$3,168.00
To: 43570 Cleaning **\$3,168.00**

AE. HEALTHY BABIES (#1159)

1. Health Dept. (340)
From: 42090 Office Supplies \$ 500.00
42195 Other Operating Supplies \$ 1,180.00
To: 43090 Other Professional Services **\$ 1,680.00**

Total Health Dept. Transfers: \$4,848.00

Tom Stump presented these requests to the Council.

On motion to approve made by Bujalski and seconded by Hess, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a vote of 5 to 0.

(pg. 486)

TRANSFER REQUESTS NOT REQUIRING COUNCIL ACTION:

(Available in the Auditor's office)

OTHER BUSINESS:

Steven Olsen presented the following items:

1. Approval of CC-2026-06: Ordinance Amending and Restating the Elkhart County Local Major Moves Construction Fund Ordinance.

On motion to approve made by Hess and seconded by Clark, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a 5 to 0 vote.

(pg. 487)

2. Approval of Interlocal Agreement Funding Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion.

On motion to approve made by Riegsecker and seconded by Bujalski, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a 5 to 0 vote.

(pg. 488)

3. Presentation of Baker Tilly 2023 and 2024 Reconciliation Results Letter. (pg. 489)
4. Approval of Ordinance CC-2026-07: An Ordinance of the Elkhart County Council Establishing the GDP Environmental Improvement Fund for the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District (4933).

On motion to approve made by Bujalski and seconded by Clark, the Council unanimously carried and approved this request with a 5 to 0 vote. Bujalski spoke about his conversation with Jim Hess on this matter and he is already working to identify appropriate uses of the funds and noted that there will be no new money funded. Olsen expanded on that and stated that there is no incoming revenue source funding this account, so once the funds are spent, it should get closed out.

(pg. 490)

AUDIENCE ITEMS: Pam Keyser, Middlebury, spoke. Glenn Null, Goshen, spoke.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the Council, on motion to adjourn made by Bujalski and seconded by Riegsecker, the Council unanimously carried and approved the adjournment of the meeting at 5:43 PM.

Tiara Jackson
Elkhart County Auditor