

**COMMISSIONER MEETING
REGULAR SESSION
March 16, 2026
9:00 AM**

ATTENDANCE:	
COMMISSIONERS:	Andy Beck, President Tom Helmer, Vice President Rick Woodall
COUNCIL:	Stephanie Campbell, President
COUNTY ATTORNEY:	Jim Ensley
AUDITOR'S OFFICE	Kristina Berish
AUDIENCE:	35 Individuals

The Putnam County Board of Commissioners met on March 16, 2026, at 9:00 AM in regular session. The meeting was held at the Putnam County Courthouse. Beck opened the meeting and the pledge to the flag was given.

COURTHOUSE TREES NORTH SIDE

Forrester Allen Royer gave review of the two trees located on the north side of the courthouse. He said they looked at the health and safety of the trees this morning. Trees are a Norway Spruce, fast growing estimation of 40-45 years old. They can live up to around 90 years old. They are extremely healthy. He personally felt they should stay. Safety standpoint they should not fall except for very bad weather such as a tornado. Helmer asked about the root system. Royer said the roots do go out a lot which will stabilize the tree.

Beck said his opinion is to leave the trees unless someone says it is a safety to human hazard. Fellow Commissioners agreed.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS & ADULT PROBATION GRANT APPLICATION

Director Jamie France said they were seeking approval for grant funding to the State of Indiana. It required a letter from the Commissioners which he had furnished to the board to review and sign.

Woodall said France had spoken about trimming their budget for next year. France said they did not in the grant application. He does know the overall grant funding has decreased by 20M. This is the first time they have experienced this type of reduction in overall funding for the program. Woodall said so submit the grant and hope for the best. France said they want to show the need for the department in the budget, but they know they may receive less and have to reduce their budget. Maybe even less than what they are receiving this year. Expect to know by July 1st.

Helmer made the motion to approve and sign the letter. Woodall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS ADVISORY BOARD

Director Jamie France said they have a couple of vacancies. Executive Committee met and nominated Brian Hopkins and Jerrod Hornaday. Helmer asked about the term limit. France said four years. Helmer made the motion to approve both nominations. Beck seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

AMBULANCE BIDS

Director Kelly Russ said it was time to get a new ambulance. Trading in an ambulance. They received bids from four companies:

\$306,822 Fire Services, Inc. (current provider of EMS ambulances)

Currently waiting on an ambulance from this company (ordered 2 years ago). Lead time is August 2026. Fire Service maintenance shop is in Beech Grove.

\$270,234 Hoosier Fire Equipment (Victory Liner) not equipped with refrigerator

\$319,170 (Superliner) the most comparable to what they have now

Anticipate from time purchased 24-month lead time. Greenfield is where their maintenance shop is located.

\$356,952 type 1 MacQueen 4-wheel drive

\$329,998 type 3

Lead time 12-13 months for stock trucks.

\$306,015 type 3 PennCare

\$350,795 type 1

\$362,065 type 1

\$297,050 type 3

\$352,050 (on the lot) type 1

Woodall made the motion to take the bids under advisement. Beck seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Russ and Fire Service gave updates on the status of ambulance they had been waiting for.

MAGISTRATE OFFICE – REMODEL REQUEST

Bailiff Markus Witt had sent to the board prior to the meeting quotes for remodel request for bullet resistant walls and glass for the magistrate office from Iron Cross Construction. Witt said the board should know there is currently a person in our jail specifically for threatening the Magistrate Judge. The office receives threats weekly. This court has the most emotionally high cases of the three courts.

Beck said he went into their office Friday to look at it. He felt it needed something. He recommended the quote for \$23,400 for a total installation with bullet proofing walls instead of not including the walls for \$22,050.

Helmer asked if there was a timeline given. Witt said he did not have one from the company. Once approved by the Commissioners and Council he would reach out to the company and get one.

Beck made the motion to approve pending the Council approval of funds. Helmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously. See if it is an allowable expense from hazardous waste, if not then make the request from the cumulative capital development fund.

SHERIFF

Sheriff Baugh said he had hired Jessica Foreman as the crisis intervention deputy. He is purchasing a used vehicle utilizing the commissary fund to pay for it. He was requesting permission to get plate and title it as a county vehicle. Beck made the motion to approve. Helmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Chief Deputy Tom Sutherlin and Sheriff Baugh brought information regarding security for the courthouse. Sutherlin explained:

Full time deputy:	\$67,210
3 part time deputies:	\$112,370
24 hours each week @ \$30/hr	
Vehicle:	\$70,000
Equipment:	\$38,688.88
Total budget cost:	\$288,218.88

Sutherlin went over the proposed schedule of how they would work the full-time deputy along with the part time deputies.

Beck asked if Sheriff thought the courthouse employees should go through the metal detector. Sheriff Baugh said talking with other counties they do not. Some employees have 24/7 access to get into the courthouse. It seems redundant and a false sense of security if someone could come in when there is not a security officer and bring in a weapon and leave it. They want to concentrate on the public coming in. Sheriff Baugh said they would prefer all employees to come through the East door with their employee lanyard on. He knows a lot of employees currently come to the North door. He felt this way it does not draw attention away from the East to the North.

Ensley said they should hold an executive meeting to discuss the logistics of how it would work and not talk about how the security would be done in a public meeting.

Woodall made the motion to proceed and seek funding from the Council. He asked about the 70K for a vehicle. Baugh said it would show officer presence outside of the building. It would also be used as an emergency transport, for example someone that had a medical event. When there is a crash near courthouse the vehicle can also be used to alert and divert traffic. This individual will be a full-time deputy and required to attend training. His department is currently short of vehicles. It could also be utilized if a Judge orders a person to jail. Helmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

HIGHWAY REPORT

Highway Director Clint Maddox presented:

- 1) Update on storm damage
- 2) Bridge 148 - converted back to a culvert
- 3) Bridge 107 - replacing bridge with a culvert
- 4) Bridge 152 - has started
- 5) Bridge 78 - taking off the inventory. Next on agenda
- 6) Tractors sold for \$35,400
- 7) Broom approved at the last meeting be delivered on March 26th
- 8) Tractor and grinder information passed out to the board
- 9) Bridge 95 – Beck made the motion to approve quote from E3 Bridge & Jamrr. Helmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- 10) Bridge 154 – Beck made the motion to approve quote from Jamrr. Helmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- 11) Bridge 92 - Beck said hold off
- 12) Bridge 211 - Helmer made the motion to approve quote from Jamrr. Beck seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- 13) Bridge 45 - Beck said it was on the county line. Have asked for proposals. Beck spoke with someone in Hendricks County; they do not have anyplace to store the historic bridge.
- 14) Resubmitting for community crossing bids. Will need to have an administrative meeting next week on Monday at 8:00 am at the highway department.
- 15) Tractor found a used 2021 tractor with 850 hours on it. Looked at it last week. Individual selling. 150 horsepower. Asking price is \$115,000.

Beck said they have equipment they want to purchase a tractor & grinder. Maddox felt the department needed it to function properly. Beck made the motion to approve pending the Council approving funding. Helmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Beck said the equipment is around 200K, they are 170K short on the budget. Beck said it would depend on what the Council decides tomorrow night at their meeting regarding their request to give 1M of the 2026 EDIT funds to the highway department for roads, bridges or equipment.

The Commissioners will need to discuss and prioritize between equipment, bridges, and roads. They do not have the funding to do all of it this year.

MINUTES

March 2, 2026 – Woodall made the motion to approve. Helmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

March 10, 2026 special session – Woodall made the motion to approve. Helmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

MAIL

The Commissioners acknowledged their mail.

TORNADO SIREN TOWN OF RUSSELLVILLE

Renee Wyatt had spoken with Ensley. He is working with her to make sure she can use the trustee funds to help with the purchase of the siren.

911 TOWER REPAIRS

Dave Clodfelter said at the last meeting Electronics Communication Systems had given him a quote of \$22,650. He has since received a quote from Commercial Radio Services: dual red and white beacon for \$14,150 or white beacon for \$12,438. Clodfelter recommended the dual red and white beacon. Beck made the motion to approve pending Council approval. Woodall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

TRUSTEES

Beck said he has had other people contact him. They would like to have another meeting. Ensley will need to check if it qualifies as an executive or a special session.

ADJOURN

Woodall made the motion to adjourn. Helmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Andy Beck, President

Tom Helmer, Vice President

Rick Woodall

Attest: Auditor's Office
Kristina Berish