

VIGO COUNTY COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 10 2025 at 5:00 P.M.
Council Chambers, Vigo County Government Center

Pledge of Allegiance

President David Thompson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Calling of the Roll

Present: Randy Gentry, Brenda Wilson, Steve Ellis, Vicki Weger, Brad Anderson, David Thompson.

Correcting the Journal of the Preceding Meetings if Needed

May 6, 2025 Sunshine Meeting

May 13, 2025 Meeting

There were no corrections to the May 6, 2025 Sunshine Meeting, Brenda Wilson made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 6, 2025 Sunshine Meeting. Brad Anderson seconded the motion. The motion passed upon a vocal vote.

There were no corrections to the May 13, 2025 Meeting Brenda Wilson made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2025 Meeting. Brad Anderson seconded the motion. Nancy Allsup abstained from this vote because she was absent from the May 13, 2025 Meeting. The motion passed upon a vocal vote.

Communications from Elected Officials or Agencies of the County

County Amber Kim with Deriva Energy approached the board to give updates on the Hoosier Jack Solar Energy Project. She explained Duke Energy Renewables was rebranded to "Deriva Energy." Amber gave a recap of the Hoosier Jack solar farm project, noting the project was on land in southern Vigo County and Northern Sullivan County. She explained the delay in this project was due to the Generator Interconnection Process. She said the Interconnection Queue can take up to years and has recently only been taking longer for new projects. The project at the time of the meeting had an estimated construction start at Q4 2025 to Q2 2026. Amber said the project was estimated to be completed in Q4 2027. She said over the project's lifetime over \$6 million in taxes would be generated for Vigo County with over \$2 million going to Vigo County, and over \$2 million going to local schools. She mentioned there would be up to 200 construction jobs over 12-18 months. Steve Ellis asked what form tax revenue on the project would take. Amber said this revenue would be in property taxes. Randy Gentry asked about this revenue being excess revenue. Counsel for Deriva said this would not be excess revenue.

Council Attorney Michael Wright gave a follow-up on the Council's previous discussion of Indiana Code 12-29-2-1.1 regarding community mental health centers. He said he had a discussion with the attorney who is advising the Hamilton Center. He was told the Hamilton Center would meet with the Council after they had some questions answered. Michael was told the Hamilton Center had every intention of complying with the statute. Randy Gentry pointed out there are many ways to comply with the statute. Michael Wright acknowledged there were no definitions in the law over who is "clinical staff." Randy expressed concern about there being ways to get around the statute. There was discussion about the legislation targeting not only the Hamilton Center but community mental health centers across the state. Michael said the Hamilton Center was in the process of making sure they fully understood the new Indiana Code. Brenda Wilson asked if the deadline to comply was July 1st. Michael said January 1st is when everyone needs to comply. Randy Gentry asked if the Council would need to make a decision in January or July. Michael Wright said it is the Council decision who gets the designation of community mental health center each year.

Chris Switzer approached the Council and said a meeting was held with the Commissioner and department heads over handbook policies the previous Friday. Switzer said the employee handbook is showing its age and the Commissioners will likely come to budget with a request to rewrite the handbook. Switzer expressed concern that County employees' morale was low. Switzer suggested a compensation policy and classification schedule for employees. He said the County should get back to a Personnel Committee consisting of a Council Appointee, Commissioner Appointee, and a Human Resources member. He said the piecemeal raises by department have lowered the morale of county employees.

Mark Clinkenbeard gave an update on the upgrades needed for the new magistrate court. He said the upgrades would cost approximately \$22,000. Mark acknowledged since this court needs to be open July 1st, it is too late to be put on the Council Agenda for a new appropriation. He said the Maintenance Department has the money in their budget and would provide the funding, but an additional appropriation request would be needed to "reimburse" the maintenance department budget. He said there was no parking available at the Community Corrections building. Mark said they had reached out to the owner of the parking lot nearby and parking spots could be rented for \$1,500 a month. He said the work north of the courthouse related to the old jail had stalled due to weather and utility work. The project is still well under budget. Mark said the Public Defender's office remodel was nearly done and almost all the new cameras were installed at the courthouse. Steve Ellis asked if the \$1,500 a month for parking would be a contract situation. Mark Clinkenbeard said the logistics around this were yet to be determined.

Jordan Orwig with the Vigo County Public Library provided updates on the 12 Points branch. He said there had been 641 new library card registered. He said there had been 100 programs for all ages held at the branch. Jordan said approximately 1700 had registered for the summer reading program system wide.

Reports from Committees

There were none.

Resolutions and Ordinances Other than Appropriations

a. Amended Salary Ordinance 2025-14: Human Resources – Salary Ordinance Corrections

This request was discussed at the sunshine meeting. Randy Gentry asked Kara Wright if the GIS Director was being paid correctly at the time of the meeting. Kara confirmed he was not. Randy Gentry wanted clarification that there would be no Additional Appropriation needed and the correct salary was indeed budgeted. Kara confirmed this was true. Brenda Wilson made a motion to approve Amended Salary Ordinance 2025-14. Randy Gentry seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote for the pending motion, voting was as follows: Randy Gentry – aye; Nancy Allsup – aye; Brenda Wilson – aye; Steve Ellis – aye; Vicki Weger – aye; Brad Anderson – aye; David Thompson – aye. With a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

Ordinances Relating to Appropriations

a. Amended Salary Ordinance 2025-15: Vigo County Courts Mandate Order – Adjusted Pay

This mandate order and settlement was discussed at the April 23, 2025 Special Call Meeting. Randy Gentry asked if the Council voted to not appropriate the money needed to fund this request, the Settlement Agreement and Release signed by the Council would be null and void. Michael Wright confirmed this was true. Randy expressed his disagreement with the process that led to this agreement between the Council and judicial employees. He expressed disagreement with the "reasonable" pay increase interpretation reflected in the pay increases. He said this process should have made it to the Indiana Supreme Court where he believed the court would not side with the Vigo County Courts. Michael Wright said he disagreed with Randy Gentry's framing of the mediation. He said the settlement agreement changes how judicial employee's salary works and places the employee's compensation decisions under officials who make decisions about those employees and the Council still has to decide what the sum of the funds the court will receive each budget process. Michael said the courts were not receiving everything they were asking for during mediation. Mike Morris then took the podium and

said he had an attorney review the settlement in Indianapolis and expressed his strong disagreement with the agreement. Vicki Weger provided additional context about the lawsuit that led to this agreement and voiced her displeasure at the taxpayers paying for both sides of the legal conflict. She expressed concern about the cost of this agreement. Randy Gentry again expressed his disagreement with the mediation process and said two council members voiced interest in outside counsel. He also voiced his displeasure with Council Attorney Michael Wright's hesitation to litigate and other actions he felt were an issue. Michael Wright expressed his disagreement with Randy Gentry's insinuations saying some of Randy's claims were incorrect about the mediation and this particular mediations' process. He maintained this was a good faith negotiation between the two parties involved. Judge Charles Johnson then took the podium and said both parties were involved in the determination process of the language of this agreement. He outlined what he felt was a need for this compensation based on Vigo County Courts' caseload. He expressed his disagreement with some members of the Council's insinuations of employees not doing the work worth the pay increases outlined in this agreement. Brenda Wilson said she had attended part of the mediation process and was surprised to learn details about previous Council members being dishonest with the Judges. She reiterated both parties had worked hard to come to this agreement. Brenda Wilson made a motion to approve Amended Salary Ordinance 2025-15. Vicki Weger seconded the motion. During discussion, Randy reiterated he did not feel the pay increases were reasonable and expressed his concern about the cost with State budgets cutting back. He also voiced his concern about another potential mandate order in the future. Upon a roll call vote for the pending motion, voting was as follows: Randy Gentry – nay; Nancy Allsup – aye; Brenda Wilson – aye; Steve Ellis – abstain; Vicki Weger – aye; Brad Anderson – aye; David Thompson – aye. With a vote of 5-1, the motion passed.

b. Additional Appropriation 2025-35: Vigo County Courts Mandate Order – Adjusted Pay

This request was discussed at the sunshine meeting. Randy Gentry once again expressed his disagreement with this Appropriation and pointed out government salaries were public record. He said morale for other county employees would be impacted by these pay adjustment. Brenda Wilson made a motion to approve Additional Appropriation 2025-35. Vicki Weger seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote for the pending motion, voting was as follows: Randy Gentry – nay; Nancy Allsup – aye; Brenda Wilson – aye; Steve Ellis – abstain; Vicki Weger – aye; Brad Anderson – aye; David Thompson – aye. With a vote of 5-1, the motion passed.

c. Additional Appropriation 2025-36: Vigo County Courts Mandate Order – Settlement Allocation

This request was discussed at the sunshine meeting. Randy Gentry asked Michael Wright about what specifically this Appropriation was funding. Michael Wright confirmed this was a stipend as part of the settlement agreement and release discussed and voted on during the April 23, 2025 Special Call Meeting. Brenda Wilson made a motion to approve Additional Appropriation 2025-36. Brenda Wilson seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote for the pending motion, voting was as follows: Randy Gentry – nay; Nancy Allsup – aye; Brenda Wilson – aye; Steve Ellis – abstain; Vicki Weger – aye; Brad Anderson – aye; David Thompson – aye. With a vote of 5-1, the motion passed.

d. Amended Salary Ordinance 2025-16: Circuit & Superior Court – New Magistrate Court

This request was discussed at the sunshine meeting. Randy Gentry asked how much the enw court reporters would be making. Judge Charles Johnson said they would be making \$50,871.70/yr. There were no further questions. Brenda Wilson made a motion to approve Additional Appropriation 2025-16. Vicki Weger seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote for the pending motion, voting was as follows: Randy Gentry – aye; Nancy Allsup – aye; Brenda Wilson – aye; Steve Ellis – aye; Vicki Weger – aye; Brad Anderson – aye; David Thompson – aye. With a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

e. Additional Appropriation 2025-37: Circuit & Superior Court – New Magistrate Court

This request was discussed at the sunshine meeting. There were no further questions. Randy Gentry made a motion to approve Additional Appropriation 2025-37. Brenda Wilson seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote for the pending motion, voting was as follows: Randy Gentry – aye; Nancy Allsup – aye; Brenda Wilson – aye; Steve Ellis – nay; Vicki Weger – aye; Brad Anderson – aye; David Thompson – aye. With a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

f. Amended Salary Ordinance 2025-17: Clerk's Office - Pay Increase Request

This request was discussed at the sunshine meeting. Elizabeth Stiverson with the Clerk's Office said she had provided members of the Council with information on several questions from last meeting including the office's turnover rate for the past four years. She elaborated more on the office's purchasing of the Certificates of Deposits and said this process would continue no matter the results of this meeting's vote. There was a brief discussion about the history of the Baker Tilley study. Brad Anderson noted that studies like the Baker Tilley study usually result in issues. Randy Gentry asked if the Council could adjust the Chief Deputy's pay since the Chief Deputies across the county are set to 80% of the elected officials' salary. Michael Wright said he thought this pay rate for Chief Deputies was correct across the County departments. Steve Ellis asked if the Clerk's Office could handle the workload from the new magistrate court without hiring additional deputies. Elizabeth said the office could. Steve Ellis asked if the Chief Deputy could have their salary adjusted since the county policy kept Chief Deputies at 80% of Elected Officials. Michael Wright said while this pay rate was a "rule" it was not a law. Kara Wright with human resources said this was not a written rule with the Baker Tilley study. David Thompson confirmed the midpoint numbers on Amended Salary Ordinance 2025-17 were correct with Kara Wright. Randy Gentry made a motion to approve Amended Salary Ordinance 2025-17 with the stipulation the Clerk office will not hire additional staff for the newly created magistrate court and the offices' pay will be frozen until the 2027 budget creation process. Steve Ellis seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote for the pending motion, voting was as follows: Randy Gentry – aye; Nancy Allsup – aye; Brenda Wilson – aye; Steve Ellis – aye; Vicki Weger – aye; Brad Anderson – aye; David Thompson – aye. With a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

g. Additional Appropriation 2025-38: Clerk's Office - Pay Increase Request

This request was discussed at the sunshine meeting. There were no further questions. Randy Gentry made a motion to approve Additional Appropriation 2025-38. Brenda Wilson seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote for the pending motion, voting was as follows: Randy Gentry – aye; Nancy Allsup – aye; Brenda Wilson – aye; Steve Ellis – aye; Vicki Weger – aye; Brad Anderson – aye; David Thompson – aye. With a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

Honorary Resolutions

There were none.

Resolutions Relating to Fiscal Policies of the Council

There were none.

Appointments

There were none.

Public Comment

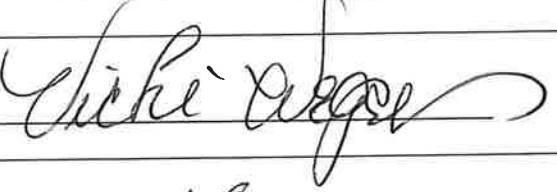
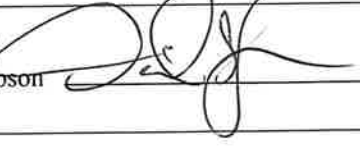
Brad Anderson said the budget committee would be meeting soon and he has asked County departments to reduce their budgets as much as possible.

Adjournment

Brad Anderson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Vicki Weger seconded the motion. With a vocal vote, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE VIGO COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING June 10, 2025

Presented to the Vigo County Council, read in full and adopted as written this 12th day of August, 2025.

Aye ☒	Absent ☐	Randy Gentry 
Nay ☐	Abstain ☐	
Aye ☐	Absent ☐	Nancy Allsup 
Nay ☐	Abstain ☐	
Aye ☐	Absent ☐	Brenda Wilson 
Nay ☐	Abstain ☐	
Aye ☐	Absent ☐	Steve Ellis _____
Nay ☐	Abstain ☐	
Aye ☐	Absent ☐	Vicki Weger 
Nay ☐	Abstain ☐	
Aye ☐	Absent ☐	Brad Anderson 
Nay ☐	Abstain ☐	
Aye ☐	Absent ☐	David Thompson 
Nay ☐	Abstain ☐	

Attest:


Larry T. Hutchings, II
Auditor