MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS AND SAFETY OF THE CITY OF JASPER
November 25, 2025

The Board of Public Works and Safety of the City of Jasper, Indiana, met in regular session on Wednesday, November 25, 2025, in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 610 Main Street and via Zoom Video Conferencing.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Dean Vonderheide the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Clerk-Treasurer Kiersten Knies then called the roll:

Mayor Dean Vonderheide	Present
Board member Timothy Bell	Present
Board member Nancy Eckerle	Present

Also, present were Police Chief Chad Dick, Street Commissioner Jeff Theising, Personnel/Safety/Loss Control Director Cale Knies, Fire Chief/Code Enforcement Officer Kenny Hochgesang and Director of Community Development and Planning Josh Gunselman, City Engineer Chad Hurm, City Attorney Renee Kabrick, Park and Recreation Director Tom Moorman, and Clerk Treasurer Kiersten Knies.

Kiersten Knies announced that in order to have a quorum for the meeting, a majority of the board members must be present. All three board members were present in person, which is a majority; therefore, there was a quorum for the meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE. Mayor Dean Vonderheide invited all those present to join in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The board members examined the minutes from the regular meeting held. on November 25, 2025. Thereafter, a motion was made by Nancy Eckerle and seconded by Tim Bell to approve the minutes from November 25, 2025, without correction. Motion carried 3-0.

PARKING CLOSURE

Mike Horney with Hoosier Business Machines appeared before the board to request permission to block parking spaces in order to replace the awning on his building. He stated that parking needs to be blocked to allow a truck to access the site. The work is expected to take one day and will most likely occur on a Saturday, though weekday work may be necessary depending on scheduling.

A motion was made by Nancy Eckerle and seconded by Tim Bell to block the parking spaces in front of Hoosier Business Machines, as well as the adjacent spaces between 8th and 9th Streets on that side of the street, on a Saturday in the near future or during the work week if necessary. Motion carried 3-0.

DUBOIS COUNTY PRIDE EVENT

Mary Warner with Dubois County Pride appeared before the Board and reported on the 2025 Pride Festival, noting over 1,500 attendees and 40+ vendors at Dave Buehler Plaza. She requested to move the 2026 festival to Saturday, October 17, 2026, citing better weather, fewer event conflicts, and positive community feedback from a Facebook survey with over two hundred responses. The event would remain at Dave Buehler Plaza with the same 11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. hours, and Park and Recreation has the date penciled in.

A motion was made by Mayor Vonderheide and seconded by Nancy Eckerle to approve the October 17, 2026, date, with setup to begin at 6:00 a.m. and teardown at 7:00 p.m. and the event to be held from 11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.at the Dave Buehler Riverwalk Plaza pending coordination with the Veterans group. Motion carried 3–0.

OPEN HIRING PROCESS

Police Chief Chad Dick requested approval to open the Chief Telecommunicator position. He explained that since the previous chief left, Lt. Dave Burger has overseen duties but cannot dispatch because he is not a certified telecommunicator. The new chief position would serve as a working supervisor handling dispatch and related administrative tasks while reporting to Lt. Burger. This will help restore staffing levels in the communications center.

A motion was made by Mayor Vonderheide and seconded by Tim Bell to open the hiring process for the Chief Telecommunicator position. Motion carried 3–0.

Chief Dick also requested authorization to hire an additional full-time telecommunicator once the Chief Telecommunicator promotion is made from within, to fill the resulting vacancy.

A motion was made by Tim Bell and seconded by Nancy Eckerle to allow the Police Department to hire a new full-time telecommunicator to fill the vacancy created by the Chief Telecommunicator promotion. Motion carried 3–0.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Fire Chief Code Enforcement Officer Kenny Hochgesang presented the previously distributed monthly code enforcement report and the monthly fuel and maintenance report. The board acknowledged receipt of the report.

FIRE STATION 3 FLOORING QUOTE UPDATE

Fire Chief Code Enforcement Officer Kenny Hochgesang noted that at the last meeting the Board accepted the low quote for the Fire Station 3 flooring project pending review of the specification. Hochgesang confirmed that the low quote meets all required specifications.

RESSTRICTED USE DONATION

Fire Chief and Code Enforcement Officer Kenny Hochgesang advised that the City of Jasper had received a donation from a resident in the sum of $1,000 with the restriction that it be used solely for the Jasper Volunteer Fire Department.

A motion was made by Mayor Vonderheide and seconded by Nancy Eckerle to approve the restrictions placed on the $1,000 donation Made to the City of Jasper to be used solely by the Jasper Volunteer Fire Department. Motion carried 3–0.

FIRE STATION 2 ROOF UPDATE

Fire Chief Code Enforcement Officer Kenny Hochgesang advised the roof on Fire Station 2 will be completed this week.

CITY HALL FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEM

Personnel Safety Loss Control Director Cale Knies advised that the fire protection system at City Hall was aging. Several duct detectors are not responding, and some parts are obsolete. Astro Security, the city's sole-source provider for security systems, provided a quote of $26,320.00 to replace all fire pulls, smoke detectors, and thirty-nine duct detectors at City Hall. Funding will come from City Hall repair funds.

A motion was made by Nancy Eckerle and seconded by Tim Bell to approve the replacement of the fire pulls, smoke detectors and the thirty-nine duct detectors at City Hall by Astro Security in the amount of $26,320.00. Motion carried 3–0.

HEAT PUMP REPAIR

Personnel Safety Loss Control Director Cale Knies sought approval to replace the bearings on the heat pump in the basement maintenance room of City Hall at a cost of $3,770. Mehringer Heating and Plumbing will perform the work as part of routine maintenance. Funding will come from the City Hall maintenance and repair fund.

A motion was made by Nancy Eckerle and seconded by Tim Bell to approve the replacement of the bearings on the City Hall heat pump by Mehringer Heating and Plumbing in the amount of $3,770. Motion carried 3-0.

TREE LIMB AND YARD WASTE GRINDING QUOTE ACCEPTANCE

Street Commissioner Jeff Theising recommended awarding Tree Limb and Yard Waste Grinding contract to the low quote, Smith Creek, at a base cost of $36,361 with additional piles charges at $3.50 per cubic yard. The total cost is not to exceed $46,861. The cost of the contract will be covered by budgeted dollars. Two bids were received out of the five that were requested.

A motion was made by Nancy Eckerle and seconded by Mayor Vonderheide to accept the quote from Smith Creek for the Tree Limb and Yard Waste Grinding Contract not to exceed $46,861. Motion carried 3–0.

STREET CLOSURES

Street Commissioner Jeff Theising sought approval to close 20th Street between Emily Street and 19th Street for Storm Sewer Replacement.

A motion was made by Tim Bell and seconded by Nancy Eckerle to approve the street closure on 20th Street between Emily Street and 19th Street for Storm Sewer Replacement. Motion carried 3-0.

Street Commissioner Jeff Theising advised that Brad Popp was seeking permission to periodically close the alley used as a driveway for several residents on Newton Street after Thanksgiving. The closure is needed to remove a damaged wall in the alley and allow a contractor to replace it. He will coordinate with residents to ensure continued access and provide advance notification.

A motion was made by Mayor Vonderheide and seconded by Nancy Eckerle to allow Brad Popp to close the alley behind Newton Street after Thanksgiving to remove and repair the wall. Nancy seconded. Motion carried 3–0.

TRECS LETTER SERVICE AGREEMENT

Clerk Treasurer Kiersten Knies requested approval of the TRECS service agreement. TRECS is a statewide mechanism for local governments to recover unpaid debts by redirecting state tax refunds. The City of Jasper uses it to reduce uncollected debts by flagging delinquent accounts for potential refund setoff, helping ensure municipal obligations get paid. Specifically, Jasper employs TRECS to notify taxpayers through a letter that any state income tax refunds may be intercepted if they owe outstanding utility bill or parking tickets. TRECS charges the City of Jasper $3.00 per letter which is far less than what it would cost the city.

A motion was made by Mayor Vonderheide and seconded by Tim Bell to approve the letter of agreement with TRECS Clearinghouse for $3.00 per letter. Motion carried 3-0.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION

Street Department – Holiday Greenery

Board member Nancy Eckerle thanked the Street Department for helping with the holiday greenery, noting that the effort worked out well and any excess greenery was removed.

Jasper RC Flyers – Land Use and Community Involvement

The Board recognized the Jasper RC Flyers for their continued use of the old landfill as a flying field. The group has been active in STEM and youth programs this year and donated to the cancer center. Two former members have pursued aviation careers.

Comprehensive Plan Update

Director of Community Development and Planning Josh Gunselman provided an update on the City's comprehensive plan. Recent activities include a think tank session and Planning Commission meeting involving multiple boards, survey results, and an economic report. A future summit and open house are scheduled for Saturday, December 6, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Parklands; attendees are asked to register in advance. In the new year, breakout task forces will invite additional community members to identify potential projects aligned with the goals of the new comprehensive plan.

City Office Closure – Employee Appreciation

Mayor Vonderheide reminded the public that City offices will close on December 3, 2026, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for an employee appreciation luncheon, except for emergency services.

Holiday Events – Santa and Tree Lighting

Board member Nancy Eckerle expressed gratitude to the Electric, Park, and Street Departments and Krempp Lumber Company for moving Santa's house, putting up the tree, and preparing for the tree lighting event on Friday. Appreciation was also extended to Ivan and Brenda Clark for donating the tree.

ADJOURNMENT. A motion was made by Tim Bell and seconded by Nancy Eckerle to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 3-0 and the meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

The minutes were hereby approved ___with ___X___without corrections or clarification this 9th day of December, 2025.

Dean Vonderheide

Mayor Dean Vonderheide, Presiding Officer

Attest: Kiersten Knies

Kiersten Knies, Clerk-Treasurer